



# Rothermere American Institute

## 2016-17 Travel Awards

### *Recipients' Reports*

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#### POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

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**ROBIN ADAMS**, ST PETER'S COLLEGE

D.Phil. Economic & Social History

*Award in support of archival research in New York*

My research trip to New York in January 2017 was indispensable to my DPhil thesis and, without the financial assistance gratefully received from the Rothermere Institute, the extent the research undertaken would have been greatly curtailed. A study of the funding of Irish Republican Government during the Irish War of Independence (1919-21) would have been incomplete without reference to funds received from America, and a satisfactory analysis of this source of finance would have been impossible without a research trip to New York.

My research in began in the archives of the New York Public Library, where I sifted through the personal papers of Frank P. Walsh, a leading figure in the American labour movement who was heavily involved in lobbying for official recognition of the Irish Republic in 1919-21. I also read through the papers of Senator William Bourke Cockran, a New York senator who was a key figure in fundraising for the moderate Irish nationalist cause, and then the radical Irish nationalist cause. In addition, I gained access to the papers of J.C. Walsh, a Canadian journalist who played a pivotal role in fundraising for the nascent and not-yet-recognised Irish Republic, and William Maloney, another advocate of the Irish republican cause in America, who was suspected by some of being a spy for the British government. All of these collections were

information rich from both an organisational and a personal point of view, enabling a far deeper understanding of the personalities involved and the political dynamics at play.

My second port of call was the library of the American-Irish Historical Society. Here, I was granted access to the papers of a number of prominent Irish Americans, and of a number of members of the Irish Republic's mission to the United States (1920-21). Chief among these resources were the papers of Judge Daniel Cohalan, an influential Irish-American who, although initially supportive of the Irish Republic's mission to America, its fundraising campaign and campaign for recognition, became an outspoken critic of the mission and sought to undermine its leadership. These papers were particularly useful, as I had hitherto only gained access to the other side of this dispute, so funds from the Rothermere Institute allowed balance to be brought to the narrative of this disagreement and nuance added to its analysis.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Rothermere Institute and its benefactors for facilitating this research trip. As became abundantly clear on arrival at New York, the extent of the source material available in the New York Public Library and the American-Irish Historical Society necessitated a lengthy time commitment, and funds awarded by the Institute were crucial in enabling a sufficiently extended period of research. The contribution of this research trip to my thesis was invaluable and the contribution of the Rothermere Institute to the research trip fundamental.

**JONATHAN ASKONAS, ST CROSS COLLEGE**

D.Phil. Politics

*Award in support of archival research in Washington, DC*

My trip, February 4<sup>th</sup> to March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017, encompassed primary source archival research, meetings with leading experts in my field, and two major conference presentations.

The primary purpose of the trip was to engage in primary source archival research in support of my DPhil thesis on American learning and local knowledge transmission in counterinsurgency operations, focused on Vietnam (with extensibility to Iraq and Afghanistan). I hoped to make several reconnaissance trips to archives, make connections with archivists, and generally establish the feasibility of my project within the empirical evidence available. This was a great success. I visited the US Army archives at the Army War College in Carlisle, PA, the National Personnel Records Center in St Louis, and contacted the digital archivist at the National Archives in College Park, MD. In each case, I was able to get a good sense of what material in these archives would support my project, and the results were extremely encouraging, and are now allowing me to write my confirmation of status package. The contacts and materials gained during this trip has greatly accelerated my thesis work. During this trip, I was also able to meet with and gain feedback from leading experts on Vietnam and counterinsurgency, including John

Nagl, Jacob Shapiro, Conrad Crane, and Stephen Biddle. I am incorporating their feedback into my project, but they were quite encouraging of my approach and its timeliness.

The secondary purpose of the trip was to give two papers at the International Studies Association Conference. Both of these papers had already been honed in RAI Graduate Seminar meetings. This early feedback paid off – both were well-received and are on their way to becoming journal articles.

I remain profoundly grateful for the RAI, not only for funding my research but also for its wonderful programming and scholarship which have enriched my time at Oxford, and I would like to especially thank RAI's benefactors. Their philanthropy is funding cutting-edge and vital work on American politics, history, and society, at a time. The work I have seen from my colleagues, funded by or supported by the RAI, is a substantial return on investment.

**JOSEPH BARRETT**, NEW COLLEGE

M.Phil. Economic & Social History

*Award in support of archival research in Washington, DC and Philadelphia*

In the 1960s-1970s, policymakers and politicians in the United States and Britain “rediscovered” poverty. Despite different welfare traditions, institutions, and political interests, both countries introduced new anti-poverty initiatives that emphasized compensatory education and community action. My thesis compares the development and implementation of two of these new initiatives: Head Start in the United States and the Urban Programme pre-schools in Britain, both of which applied community action and compensatory education concepts in attempts to mitigate the effects of child poverty. The literature on these programs, and anti-poverty policy in this period more broadly, focuses almost exclusively on experts and politicians, largely overlooking local implementation and how poor communities responded to and influenced program development. To address this gap, my thesis will include case studies of individual programs in comparable urban areas in both countries, examining the programs’ day-to-day work and how they were experienced and shaped by the “poor” children, parents, and communities they targeted.

In July and August of 2016, I traveled to archives in the United States to conduct research on the federal politics of Head Start and to gather material for a case study of Head Start’s local implementation in the late 1960s. In July, I spent a week at the National Archives in College Park, MD, where I examined the records on Head Start within the files of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). In the Archive, I focused on the Inspection Reports (prepared by federal investigators) on individual Head Start programs and the Narrative Progress Reports that community organizations across the United States sent to OEO to meet the conditions of federal grants. I also examined the records of the OEO Director and files on “public reaction”

to OEO programs both of which helped me to place Head Start within the larger context of the War on Poverty. Analyzing these files enabled me to understand the lens through which the federal government approached the work done by Head Start programs around the country and the issues that typified the implementation of this new initiative. This research also helped me to identify a specific program, the Head Start program run by the Social Development Commission of Milwaukee, from which there were enough surviving records to prepare a case study.

Following my research at the National Archives, I travelled to Milwaukee to examine the records of the city and county government agencies and the non-profit organizations that were involved in developing and implementing Milwaukee's Head Start program in the 1960s. At the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, I reviewed the papers of Mayor Henry Maier to understand the city government's approach to poverty alleviation. I also examined documents related to Milwaukee's school desegregation case to analyze the intersection between Milwaukee's civil rights movement and the politics of social service provision. At the Milwaukee Historical Society and Marquette University Archives, I consulted the papers of non-profit organizations that administered Head Start programs and the papers of county government officials. My trip was capped by a visit to the Milwaukee Public Library, which holds evaluations of Milwaukee's early Head Start program and an extensive collection of local newspaper clippings from the 1960s and 1970s.

The opportunity to work at these archives will enable me to write a thesis focused on the local implementation of Head Start (and the Community Action Program more broadly) a topic that is neglected in the existing literature on the War on Poverty and that would have been impossible to explore if I had not been able to visit the archives in person. This fall, I will build on my research in the United States and develop a comparative study by conducting research at archives in Britain on pre-schools funded by the Urban Programme in the 1970s.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to undertake this research and thankful for the generosity of the benefactors of the RAI without which these archival trips would not have been possible. I am also thankful for the consideration and assistance of the RAI Travel Grants Committee. The opportunity to visit these archives has greatly enriched my academic experience at Oxford and I hope to repay this support by sharing and discussing the results of my research with my peers at Oxford this academic year.

**JENNIFER BRIGHT**, BALLIOL COLLEGE

D.Phil. Social Policy

*Award in support of interviews in New York and Washington, DC*

I am very grateful to the benefactors for their support of the RAI travel grant. The fieldwork completed as result of the grant is central to my D.Phil. in Social Policy. A large portion of the fieldwork consists of in-person interviews in New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C., and Princeton and phone interviews. The award particularly enabled my transcription of these interviews essential to my process-tracing methodology. As a result of such fieldwork, I am poised to make a theoretical contribution to the literature on urban power and a methodological contribution to the literature on process tracing.

Broadly, the research project seeks to understand what drives economic-development policymaking in 21<sup>st</sup> century U.S. cities. My dissertation builds on the literature on urban power. Specifically, its empirical focus is power within policy decision-making processes in U.S. cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a topic of increasing relevance and potentially changing character. It observes a particular case—the 2009 Applied Sciences initiative under the Bloomberg administration in New York City—in order to identify the causal mechanisms of its policy decision-making processes and, in so doing, constructs a theory of urban power specific to the case. More particularly, process-tracing methodology constructs a detailed causal narrative of Applied Sciences NYC from the stage of policy-issue identification (2009) to the stage of policy-response identification (2011) through a mixed-qualitative methodology of documentary analysis and elite interviewing. The theory of urban power that emerges from the dissertation can, then, be tested for its ability to be generalized in future research.

The research questions that the dissertation addresses, therefore, include: (1) What factors contributed to power within policy decision-making processes in the Applied Sciences initiative in New York City under the Bloomberg administration? (2) What do these factors and their relative importance convey about how relational power, the political economy, and mayoral agency shaped policy decision-making processes in New York City under the Bloomberg administration?

In-person and phone interviews are crucial to constructing the causal narrative of Applied Science NYC. They reveal a detailed policy decision-making rationale, beyond what can be ascertained from documentary analysis. The interviewees can be divided into two, loose groups: governmental officials and appointees involved in Applied Sciences NYC and non-governmental stakeholders that were involved in Applied Sciences NYC, for example, directly through public engagement or indirectly because the initiative impacts the remit of their organization. I estimate that, in the end, I will conduct ~60 interviews, or until I reach theoretical saturation. I simultaneously—in the reflexive manner characteristic of process-tracing methodology—have kept a detailed fieldwork journal, revising my topic guides for subsequent interviews based on what I find confirmatory, new, and puzzling from previous interviews, and conducting

(preliminary) interview and documentary analysis. Transcription has then allowed me to revisit and code the interviews for my analysis.

**CAMILLA CHEN, ST EDMUND HALL**

D.Phil. English

*Award in support of archival research in Philadelphia, PA*

In September 2016, a Research and Travel Award from the RAI enabled me to undertake my first visit to the United States of America; more specifically, to the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

For my thesis chapter on Marianne Moore, this was an invaluable trip: the Rosenbach houses an impressive Moore archive that ranges from the poet's manuscripts, correspondences, and notebooks, to personal items including scrapbooks and photo albums, knick-knacks, and even a baseball jacket. The staff at the Rosenbach, particularly the head librarian, Elizabeth Fuller, were immensely generous with their time, ensuring that I was able to access all the material I requested. I am particularly interested in Moore as a collector and assembler of the disparate and unexpected, and happily spent a week in the archive poring over the ephemera, and getting an idea of her collector's eye. Being a scholar largely focused on the modernist period, having access to Moore's enormous collection of letters was also edifying for me: for a number of years, Moore served as the editor of *The Dial*, an influential modernist literary magazine; because of and aside from this position, she was also in correspondence with innumerable literary and artistic figures, and her letters illuminate and delineate the development of many creative voices and currents of her time. While my attention was centered on Moore, the next chapter in my thesis is on Elizabeth Bishop, and the chance I got to peruse her written correspondence with the latter in the capacity of a mentor was additionally very useful for future work.

During my time in America, I also travelled to New York City in order to see the city that Moore loved, and visit the specific sites where she lived and worked: I began my day at the American Museum of Natural History, where she spent hours taking detailed notes and making sketches of creatures such as the jerboa, which would subsequently become the subjects of poems. I then visited two apartments: first, 14 St. Luke's Place, where she lived from 1918 to 1929, just across the street from the Hudson Park of the New York Public Library, where she also worked for a short while. From the West Village I headed to the Clinton Hill neighbourhood in Brooklyn, and specifically to her old apartment at 260 Cumberland Street, where she resided for nearly thirty years. I found this physical excursion to actual sites to be enriching in ways unachievable by the perusal of biographical archive material, even despite the intervening years and however they might have altered the city. It also felt appropriate, for

Moore paid attention to the spaces she occupied, frequently taking note of how interiors were arranged, and responding to the architecture and fashions of her surroundings.

I am extremely grateful to the RAI for this opportunity to not only access valuable archive material, but to also walk in the footsteps of the subject of my research subject, and get a rounded sense of her creative process, as well as the material that inspired her first-hand.

**JANE DINWOODIE**, LINCOLN COLLEGE

D.Phil. History

*Award in support of archival research at Tulane University, New Orleans*

In April 2017, I travelled to New Orleans to attend the Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, where I presented a paper, and to visit the archives of Tulane University.

At Tulane, I accessed two collections of papers in the Louisiana Research Collection relating to Adrien Emmanuel Rouquette: a French Creole who lived in Louisiana in the mid-nineteenth century and became celebrated as, among other things, a poet, priest, and Indian missionary. According to local lores, Rouquette is said to have lived so closely to his charges' customs that he became known as 'Chahta-Ima', or 'like a Choctaw'. Given his unusual life, Rouquette has been the subject of much historical attention in his own right. For me, however, Rouquette provided a window into a much bigger story about Indian Removal and its aftermath in the South.

My in-progress doctoral dissertation – 'Beyond Removal: Indians, States, and Sovereignties in the American South, 1812-1860' – focuses on the many indigenous Southerners who managed to avoid federal removal attempts and remain in the region following the 1830s. By ranging across the region and its polities, it provides the first account of non-removal as a massive cross-regional phenomenon which affected not only indigenous Southerners, but also American officials, local residents, and continental dynamics of sovereignty, state development, and empire.

Alongside his career as priest and poet, Adrien Rouquette also served as a self-appointed missionary to the Bayou Lacombe Choctaws – a community of evading, non-removed Choctaws, who created a life for themselves amidst the Louisiana swamps and bayous. Like many groups in my dissertation, because the Bayou Lacombe Choctaws deliberately sought to distance themselves from federal officials and white neighbours, much of their story is virtually invisible in the traditional historical record. However, Adrien Rouquette's papers provide a vital insight into their lives. At Tulane, I was able to access letters that he wrote to friends recalling his time with the community, as well as the ways that they suspected him of being an agent and ran away from him in his initial attempts to introduce himself to them. Though small

and fleeting, these documents provide vital insights into the ways that this evasive community behaved in the years immediately following removal.

As I had already viewed a separate set of Rouquette's papers at Notre Dame, visiting Tulane provided the chance to complete the puzzle, fleshing out glimpses into the Choctaw community's lives through the full set of correspondence, newspaper clippings, and literature that Rouquette left behind him. I am enormously grateful to the Rothermere American Institute and its benefactors for the opportunity to access these archives, which will add much to my attempts to recapture the hidden and fragmentary stories of evasive groups like the Bayou Lacombe Choctaws.

**RIVERS GAMBRELL, KELLOGG COLLEGE**

D.Phil. History

*Award in support of archival research in Ohio*

Scattered throughout the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio, are massive posters reminding visitors that *every* day is a legendary day at the Hall of Fame. This was undoubtedly true of my week-long visit there this past August. Thanks to an RAI Travel Award, I was able to conduct archival research at the Ralph Wilson Jr. Research and Preservation Center, which is home to more than 20 million document pages and 3 million photographic images in the Hall of Fame's collection.

Alongside aging football memorabilia (including the blood-stained jerseys of former Super Bowl champions) some of these documents contain detailed information regarding the National Football League's relationship with the United States government and military. This material will serve as the archival basis for my doctoral dissertation, which focuses on the relationship between the National Football League and the American presidency. This project builds on my Master's thesis, entitled 'Football, Flags and Flyovers: American Nationalism and the Violent Spectacle of the NFL.'

Among the Center's files, I was able to uncover confidential memos, meeting minutes, and correspondences detailing the history of the League's involvement in American politics. According to the Hall's archivist, Jon Kendle, many of the folders I accessed contained material that had rarely (if ever) been requested by academic researchers.

Perhaps the most fascinating item I came across was a personal letter from then-Vice President Richard M. Nixon to Hall of Fame Coach George Allen. The letter was found in what Kendle calls 'the State Farm collection.' Apparently, when Coach Allen's house flooded, the State Farm Insurance Company took possession of some contents and donated them to the Hall of Fame. One volunteer historian told me that as he was sifting through various useless folders (utility bills, etc.) he came across a letter from Nixon. I inquired about this, and sure enough, stuck



inside a tattered copy of *My Kind of Football* by Steve Owen was the original letter to Allen from Nixon, thanking the coach for sending him a copy of his new book about football drills.

All in all, my trip to the Hall of Fame archives was as productive as it was fascinating, and it would not have taken place if not for the benefactors of the Rothermere American Institute, to whom I am very much indebted. By accessing these hitherto unexamined primary sources, I now have the opportunity to jumpstart the scholarly conversation on one of the most powerful corporations in history, and make a lasting contribution to the existing literature on sport and the American presidency. Thank you again for awarding me this fantastic opportunity.

**LOUIS HALEWOOD, MERTON COLLEGE**

D.Phil. History

*Award in support of archival research in Washington, DC*

I used the generous funding provided by the Rothermere American Institute Research and Travel Award to conduct archival research in Washington, D.C. in the summer of 2016. This research is critical to the successful completion of my doctoral thesis on maritime diplomacy during and after the Great War. Starting with the outbreak of war in 1914, my research seeks to examine the role of sea power in diplomacy, and how Britain, France, Italy, and the United States used maritime diplomacy to achieve national policies in co-operation and competition with one another. Their relationships shifted throughout this period of upheaval: all of these powers fought side-by-side to achieve the defeat of Imperial Germany in 1918. However, in the aftermath of the war their relationships grew more complex as they negotiated trade-offs between collective and individual security, resulting in the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922. With regard to the United States, I am particularly interested in understanding the dynamic between its highly-ambitious naval leadership, which envisaged building an unrivalled navy which could make the seas safe for American trade, and its political masters and their use of America's nascent naval power in diplomacy with potential rivals. Under President Woodrow Wilson the navy started along a course of ascendancy, but new challenges – in the form of forging a new world order in 1919, the president's ill-health, and the subsequent administration of Warren G. Harding – hampered this, causing disgruntlement and a tempering of these ambitions of naval mastery.

I spent my trip visiting three different archives in Washington and the surrounding area: the Library of Congress, and two branches of the National Archives (NARA I in downtown Washington, and NARA II located at College Park, Maryland). The Library of Congress holds vast collections of personal papers, including those of senior admirals and government officials. With the help of their enthusiastic and generous archivists, I accessed a wealth of sources, including the papers of Admiral William S. Benson, Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William S. Sims, the commander of American naval forces in European waters, and junior

officers of that period who forged the future of the navy in the inter-war years, notably the then-Captain Ernest J. King. I also was able to explore documents belonging to senior politicians, including Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, as well as lesser-known figures who nevertheless played an important role in shaping American naval power, such as Chandler P. Anderson.

I spent a considerable amount of my time at NARA I examining the records of the General Board, considered to be the 'brain' of the navy, and the reports of naval attachés posted to Britain, France, and Italy. NARA II contains the bulk of post-war diplomatic records, including papers relating to the Paris Peace Conference and Washington Naval Conference, which will be vital in enabling me to bridge the gap between the often-divided fields of naval history and diplomatic history. Ultimately, the success of this research trip will enable me to write-up the American sections of my thesis, and enable comparisons of how the US deployed maritime diplomacy to achieve its ends against how European states understood the function of sea power in international relations short of war. Without the generous funding provided by the RAI this would not be possible; I am extremely grateful for this support.

**CHRISTOPH NITSCHKE, KEBLE COLLEGE**

D.Phil. History

*Award in support of archival research in Washington, DC, Indiana, and Ohio*

In December 2016, and again in March/April 2017, I was able to undertake two very important research trips that would not have been possible without the generous help of the Rothermere American Institute. Both trips were to archives in the United States and tied to my dissertation on *The Panic of 1873 and US Foreign Relations*.

My thesis deals with the financial and economic crisis of 1873 from a foreign relations perspective. The near-global crash and its ensuing depression revealed the sweeping, interconnecting changes that had been afoot in the nature of business and finance for several years, if not decades. They were paralleled and fuelled by a speculative boom starting in the late-1860s. At the heart of this moneymaking culture was the bottomless supply of credit. Financial instruments easily crossed the Atlantic, and European capitalists were heavily invested in American federal stability and economic growth as they bought both U.S. government securities and bonds of private companies. Yet investors' confidence in American enterprise and stability was tied to a larger assessment of American "credit" and prestige in the world.

I therefore ask how capitalist sales networks and networks of U.S. foreign relations overlapped socially and combined for the same goal of "selling" America abroad. U.S. foreign relations at the time, I argue, were characterised by political-economic exchanges greatly dependent on a transnational elite of financiers, traders, journalists, consuls, and diplomats. These people, who

I call “brokers of foreign relations”, collectively built and maintained the social and business circuitry necessary for the conduct of U.S. economic and diplomatic foreign policy. The networks these cosmopolitan brokers made were essential foreign relations infrastructure, but they were also the conduits of panic and financial contagion in 1873. American national interests, I suggest, thus involuntarily contributed to causing the transatlantic financial crisis of 1873.

My first trip went to Washington D.C. in December 2016. Around three weeks of research in the National Archives yielded a large set of material from Record Group 59’s foreign dispatches. Mostly microfilmed, this collection consists of reports that U.S. ministers and consuls sent back to the Department of State in Washington. It is an underused but very rich collection which allows the historian to incorporate a breadth of voices that add texture to how American businesses and American foreign policy were adapting to a globalizing world in the late 1860s and early 1870s. While I concentrated on U.S. foreign posts in England, Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands, adding consulates in places such as Cape Town, Havana, La Paz, Shanghai, or Yokohama gave me a better idea of how the foreign service promoted various aspects of American business, politics, and culture.

William Prentiss Webster, the U.S. consul general at Frankfort, is a good example of a broker of foreign relations. A close observer of both trade and financial markets, Webster saw an upswing of activity that “makes Germany as important to us, as France or England.” Believing that “much German progress is due to more extended contact to Americans”, he held as an American virtue “that the individual is extending the business, the industrial interests, and the trade and commerce of the country, and in his turn advancing the government”.

Webster’s correspondence also provided evidence on how credit tied private fate to national standing. Credit, and the reputation that derived from it, was a sacred good for any transnational American. The Consul General dealt with the case of an American lady in Munich who found herself without money and appealed to the local U.S. consulate for help – “as an American, and for the reputation of America”. After the Panic of 1873 had struck, then, Webster lamented how “the honor as well as the credit of our country has been periled by the recklessness with which [...] states and corporations have” issued bonds.

My second trip, which I just completed (April 2017), took me to the American Midwest. In Bloomington, Indiana, I worked through the papers of Hugh McCulloch (1808-1895). McCulloch is important in various ways: as Secretary of the Treasury from 1865 to 1869, he directed American fiscal policy and laid the groundwork for the later refinancing of the United States’ massive war debts. U.S. Government bonds had been successfully sold to American small investors during the war, but were now being bought by European investors who valued the stability and high yield. McCulloch was a friend of banker Jay Cooke (1821-1905), who had done most of the bond selling in the Civil War, and whose failure triggered the Panic of 1873. The former Secretary of the Treasury also joined Cooke’s bank to head its critically important

London house in 1871. McCulloch's correspondence is extensive and allows great insight into American finance in London.

After Bloomington, I headed to Miami University in the small town of Oxford, Ohio. Its Walter Havinghurst Special Collections hold the papers of Robert Cumming Schenck (1809-1890), U.S. minister to Great Britain from 1871 to 1875. As such, Schenck was central not only to representing the U.S. politically, but also acted as a social hub for Americans abroad. In this capacity, his correspondence with Secretary of Legation Benjamin Moran, in particular, is very enlightening as to the social overlap of various brokers of foreign relations. It will undoubtedly deepen my understanding of how American diplomats, bankers, and businessmen interacted.

In conclusion, thanks to the generosity of the benefactors of the Rothermere American Institute, I was able to undertake archival research and investigate sources which few, if any, historians have looked at in connection to U.S. foreign relations and the Panic of 1873. This has unquestionably been a critically important step forward in the second year of my DPhil.

**MIKE NORTON**, NUFFIELD COLLEGE

D.Phil. Politics

*Award in support of interviews in Washington, DC*

I have recently returned from Washington, D.C. as part of my dissertation research, and am grateful for the support of the Rothermere American Institute in making the trip happen. I conducted over twenty-five interviews on the polarization of Congress with former Representatives, campaign managers, party operatives, think tank pundits, and academics. The interviews with former chairs of the parties' congressional campaign committees (Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, or DCCC, and National Republican Congressional Committee, or NRCC) and former party political staff will be instrumental for my paper on how the parties gain/retain moderate, swing districts and answering the question as to why moderate districts are rarely represented by a moderate legislator.

Previously, my research had focused on the individual level office, analysing a member's ideological response to electoral margins in the previous election. The interviews changed that theoretical side as member after member noted that their thinking was largely based on getting to 218 votes (a majority of the House) and only then did the party caucus provide some leeway to moderate members to vote against the party. That is to say, moderate members did not act independently, and their reliance on party campaign funds influenced their decision to vote with leadership, even if against the wishes of their district. Nonetheless, the decline of party "soft money" and the rise of independent expenditures from super PACs have impacted leadership's

influence over members, a time trend that I will discuss as part of the qualitative analysis of my dissertation.

The second portion of my interviews focused on the top two primary format, a party primary election format unique to California, Washington, and Louisiana. Previous literature on primary election formats has not distinguished the top two format from the others, which misses its ability to dissolve party lines and reward more moderate members. Unlike other primary formats, the top two includes all candidates from every party on the initial ballot and the top two go onto the general election (hence the name). I argue in the paper that top two leads to more moderate members by reducing their ability to rally the base, creates challenges for high information voters to strategically vote for weaker candidates of opposing parties, and moderates representatives from highly partisan districts where the general election involves two candidates from the same party. The interviews largely supported this analysis, and provided additional insight into how candidates and their campaigns navigate the top two format in highly competitive districts in which either party could win the general. The qualitative analysis will be a key component of my dissertation.

Finally, the interviews guided my ideas for my third and final paper of the dissertation. Based on the recommendations of the interviewees, I have narrowed down the topic to either earmark legislation (money to fund district-specific projects the member supports) or the Hastert Rule (only bringing legislation to the floor that is supported by the majority of the majority party, to protect members of their party from potentially divisive votes), examining how these elements affect congressional polarization in ways previous literature has not discussed.

I would again like to thank the Rothermere American Institute and its donors for making the trip happen. RAI has been an integral part of my Oxford experience, and I am thankful for the community and its role in the evolving discussion of American politics.

**NINA YANCY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**

D.Phil. Politics

*Award in support of field work in Baton Rouge, LA*

As a student of public opinion on race and class, I can imagine writing my doctoral dissertation using survey data alone. Yet, having now returned to Oxford after a summer spent conducting primary research in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, I am convinced of the importance of engaging with the people and places behind survey data; and deeply grateful for the support of the Rothermere American Institute in affording me the opportunity to do so.

You might be wondering: “Why Baton Rouge?” It helps to explain that my family roots lie in South Louisiana, but this alone has rarely convinced anyone of my choice. Although Baton Rouge is the state capital, a major hub of Exxon refineries, and the site of Louisiana State

University as well as the historically black Southern University, it is not a place that normally gets much attention. It feels more like a big small town than a small big city. With a sprawled, suburban population of 800,000 people across 4,000 square miles, Baton Rouge seems content to be known for family, faith, and, most importantly, football.

To be fair, this lack of cultural distinctiveness, in comparison to Cajun country in Lafayette or the Creole and cosmopolitan New Orleans, actually lent Baton Rouge to my cause. It is a city more cleanly divided into black and white, poor and rich, north and south.

What truly drove my selection of field site, however, is a movement that has been unfolding over the past several years: an initiative by residents of the unincorporated parts of East Baton Rouge parish to break away from the current consolidated city-parish governance structure and incorporate a new municipality, to be called the city of St. George. Leaders of the effort argue this would be an improvement in many regards, but they also make clear that establishing a new city is a means to their ultimate end of creating an independent school district in the southeastern part of the parish.

For anyone familiar with Baton Rouge's troubled history as home to the longest school desegregation lawsuit in the country, the St. George movement immediately sets off red flags. If incorporated, St. George would instantly become one of the richest and whitest cities in Louisiana, leaving behind the impoverished and mostly black community of North Baton Rouge. The case of St. George therefore offered me a perfect opportunity to explore opinions about the core themes of my research – race, inequality, and geography – by orienting my conversations around a movement that identifies as race-neutral but has deep racial implications.

I could never have expected how much more there would be to talk about in Baton Rouge this summer. The start of July brought a wave of wrongful deaths of civilians at the hands of police officers, and officers at the hands of civilians. I spent my first day in Louisiana attending the funeral of Alton Sterling, and my third, watching in horror as news unfolded about the murders of officers Montrell Jackson, Matthew Gerald, and Brad Garafola. The following weeks were an experience of collective shock and mourning in Baton Rouge. Calls for “togetherness” and “unity” were by far the loudest. For some, this rhetoric reflected a real desire for conversation about structural racism and inequality; for others, it seemed a way to call for healing without recognizing the cause of the sickness. It all amounted to an unexpected, tragic, and theoretically rich background for my research.

I kept up a brisk pace to interview 48 Baton Rouge residents in four weeks. I spoke to prominent voices in the St. George effort and to those who led the opposition; to teachers, school board members, charter school operators, and district employees; to “insiders” in Baton Rouge's local government and downtown organizations; and to social workers, community organizers, homemakers, priests, professors, lawyers, and more. I could see that the racial tensions that erupted this summer came from the same foundation which had allowed the St. George movement to take hold. Proponents of St. George argued that the recent violence validated the reasons they wanted to sever ties with Baton Rouge. Opponents saw the violence

as representative of the consequences of the “white flight” that had created the split between the St. George area and the inner city in the first place.

The varied perspectives I collected constitute a dataset that will play an integral role in my dissertation moving forward. My doctoral project seeks to reexamine the “group threat” hypothesis, or the idea that majority group members respond hostilely to geographies of racial diversity. The research I conducted in Baton Rouge offered powerful evidence for the need to update the rhetoric of threat and hostility to capture the degree of insularity and complacency that, I argue, are most pernicious in upholding an unequal racial hierarchy in the U.S.

Given the turmoil surrounding my arrival in Baton Rouge, it is incredible that my departure was flanked by yet more tragedy, as I left amidst historic flooding that destroyed much of the area in mid-August. The situation in south Louisiana remains dire, and hard to process. It heightens, however, my gratitude that I was able to carry out this research, and motivates me to put the reflections that were shared with me to good use. It was a powerful summer – academically as well as personally – and it would not have been possible without the generosity of the RAI and the benefactors of the Travel Awards. Your support for graduate research is invaluable. I hope that this report, along with the photographs to follow, convey both how meaningful this fieldwork experience was to me and how important the data I collected will be for my doctoral studies.

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## UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

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**OLIVIA HEPSWORTH**, HERTFORD COLLEGE

B.A. History

*Award in support of archival research at Harvard University*

In September, I spent two weeks researching for my thesis entitled ‘Our Bodies Ourselves and changing views of women's sexuality, 1973-1984.’ For this research, I travelled to Cambridge, Massachusetts to the archives of Harvard’s Scheslinger Library, to study the records of the Boston’s Women’s Health Collective.

The Collective formed in the early 1970s, after meeting in a class about women’s health, and decided to research and compile a pamphlet designed to empower women through providing them with information about their own bodies, frustrated by the lack of accessibility to medical knowledge for women in this period. The success of the 1971 pamphlet, led to them being picked up by a publisher and the first edition of ‘Our Bodies Ourselves’ being produced in

1973, selling over 4 million copies and being translated into 29 languages. Throughout the two week period, I studied many hundreds of documents taken from the Collective over their 40 year existence, both internal records - for example meeting minutes and correspondence - and the presentation of their book 'Our Bodies Ourselves' in the contemporary media. The archives allowed me to study readers' responses to the book which was particularly interesting, especially looking at responses to the revolutionary chapter in the 1973 edition 'In Amerika they call us Dykes'. Unlimited access to the archived material of 'Our Bodies Ourselves' allowed me to mark the evolution of the book and the information within it over time. Being in Cambridge allowed me to meet with one of the founders of the Collective which was a fascinating experience, and really insightful to allow me to understand how the collective formed and operated in the 1970s, and the change of the collective with time. It was also really interesting to learn about the current activities of The Boston's Women's Health Collective, in particular their campaign to protect and empower surrogate women in South East Asia.

Being in Cambridge, I also visited Harvard University, MIT and explored the sights of Boston, a city with a rich and unique history. I particularly loved Harvard's Natural History Museum, and walking around Boston on the freedom trail. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Rothermere American Institute and its benefactors, for their kind donation that facilitated me going on this trip and the wonderful experience I had.

**JENNY VENABLES, PEMBROKE COLLEGE**

B.A. History & Politics

*Award in support of archival research in Washington, DC and Maryland*

I received a travel grant from the Rothermere American Institute in the summer of 2016 in order to assist me in my primary research for my undergraduate thesis to be completed in Hilary Term 2017 under the supervision of Dr Stephen Tuffnell, of St Peter's College. My focus on the indentured servants of pre-revolutionary eighteenth century Maryland had three main sites of interest on my trip; the Library of Congress in Washington DC, the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore, and the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis. I found all three institutions to be extremely interested in my research and willing to help with anything I needed.

I flew in to Washington DC where I had set up a meeting with a researcher in the Newspaper and Periodical Room at the Library of Congress; Arlene had prepared the microfilm I needed upon my arrival as well as several books she thought might be of some benefit to my research. Their microfilm machines allowed me to save digital scans to my USB stick and the library staff were more than happy for me to take pictures of any other documents I might need.



I found that wherever I travelled people were interested to hear what I was doing and what I had found so far, travelling across states by Amtrak trains allowed for interesting conversations as well as productive wi-fi use.

My experience of research in Baltimore was rather different to that in Washington; the Society had narrow opening hours, hours that were restricted further by filming of the Netflix TV programme House of Cards that was being carried out within the building. Nevertheless I managed to find the time to gain access to original papers of ship masters and merchants of servants during the eighteenth century as well as indexes of convicts transported to the colony during this period.

I took an Uber to Annapolis on the advice of several locals and had a very interesting conversation with my African-American driver, Thomas, about his thoughts on the recent riots in Baltimore as well as the Black Lives Matter movement and his fear of a Trump Presidency. It was an enjoyable and thoughtful journey and set me up for a productive day in the State Archives. I had set up a meeting in the conservation lab with a researcher, Maria, who was to give me access to original copies of the Maryland Gazette from my time period. Maria was extremely helpful and interested in my research; she took me to lunch to discuss it and her work further. I spent the next day cross referencing convict lists with runaway notices in newspapers before getting the train to New York to visit friends for the weekend.

My trip gave me the opportunity to see and view documents that I did not even know existed as well as see sources that are not digitized. I met fantastic people in every state I visited who gave me new pathways to go down with my research and great conversation about lives completely different to my own. I must thank the benefactors of the Travel Grant of the Rothermere American Institute at the University of Oxford for giving me this fantastic opportunity.