



# Rothermere American Institute

## 2018-19 Travel Awards

### *Recipients' Reports*

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#### POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

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**ASHA BANERJEE**, BALLIOL COLLEGE

M.Phil. in Economic and Social History

*Award for research at the J.P. Morgan Library and Archive and New York Stock Exchange Archives, and at the Library of Congress*

I am very grateful for the support which I received from the Rothermere American Institute. The travel award allowed me to travel to New York City and Washington D.C. to carry out archival research for my MPhil dissertation in Economic and Social History. My dissertation focuses on how a historical American financial crisis, the Panic of 1907, affected Britain, the topic economic power at the time. For a transatlantic topic, it was critical for me to examine primary sources in the United States, specifically in New York and DC, the financial and governmental centers of the US.

While there is a rich historiography of the Panic of 1907 as a pivotal American financial crisis in the “first wave of globalization” (1870-1914), I found there was little done on its international effects, specifically on Britain, which underwent a steep recession in 1908. While there are macroeconomic statistical tests which can establish contagion, these archives can shed some light on how private individuals and institutions and governmental sources alike perceived the crisis, and its international spillover effects. Given that this archival research was taking place almost exactly at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2008 financial crisis, this search for the consequences of American financial crises felt all the more relevant.

At the New York Stock Exchange Archive in Mahwah, NJ, I examined the Governing Committee Minutes. These papers and reports revealed how the NYSE was affected by and reacted to the financial crisis in 1907. The Columbia University Rare Books and Manuscripts Library contained both the New York Clearing House Association (NYCHA) Records and the papers of prominent American investment banker James Stillman. Given that there was no Federal Reserve at the time (the severity of the 1907 crisis led to its creation), the NYCHA acted as the main regulators and responsive body. James Stillman's letters during the time of the crisis gave valuable insights into the perception and impact of the crisis on the American financial community, as well as provided a glimpse into what information European bankers were receiving. The papers of investment bank Brown Brothers & Harriman at the New York Historical Society also provided similar vivid accounts of the financial crisis. Finally, in New York, I consulted J.P. Morgan's papers at the Morgan Museum & Library. As J.P. Morgan played almost a single-handed role in stemming the crisis, his papers were critical in assessing the American response.

While the archives in New York City provided me with evidence of how the private banking sector and financial institutions (such as the Stock Exchange and Clearing House) reacted to the crisis, the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. gave me a glimpse into the executive and government response. The George Cortelyou (Secretary of the Treasury) papers and Theodore Roosevelt papers were very useful in piecing together the government response, which sometimes differed from the private sector response.

I am truly grateful and would like to thank the RAI benefactors for this amazing opportunity. Without their support, I would not have been able to visit so many rich archives. I am positive that the materials I found will create the foundation for a strong dissertation.

**DOMINIC BARKER**, LADY MARGARET HALL

D.Phil. in History

*Nicolas Ollivant Award for research at the Gerald Ford Presidential Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and Eureka College, Illinois*

I would like to express my gratitude for the award which enabled me to spend two weeks in Madison this past October, enabling me to complete the research required for my DPhil thesis on 'Ronald Reagan and Race: The Evolution of Colour-Blind Conservatism'.

Ronald Reagan was, and indeed remains a politician of global standing. His presidency is remembered around the world for his fight against communism overseas and for tax cuts at home. Scholars looking to understand the man at the heart of it all have often travelled to Reagan's home state of California and pored over the millions of pages at the Reagan Presidential Library, along with other important repositories of conservative history such as the Hoover Institution. So, what connects Reagan with the Midwest and Madison? The former president was born and raised in rural Illinois, attending college in Eureka. The purpose of my trip, however, was to spend time

in the world-class archives of the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, and the related Wisconsin Historical Society.

If we truly want to understand the man who became an ‘-ism’, we need to trace back further than his presidency or even his governorship in California. What made Reagan distinct was his ideological consistency through a period of great change in American politics, namely the shifting of the two parties in the latter half of the twentieth century. Consequently, understanding the fortieth president requires a deep look at his years in Hollywood as an actor and president of the Screen Actors Guild. Here, the holdings of the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research are crucial. During my two weeks, I was able to dive into the collections of groups Reagan engaged with in his earlier years including the Hollywood Democratic Committee, the Hollywood Independent Citizens’ Committee of Arts Sciences and Professions, and the American Veterans’ Committee. These groups all played an integral role in either defending or condemning Hollywood during the Red Scare of the 1940s and 50s. Importantly, the widespread coverage of communist infiltration shaped the public’s attitudes and helped drive the growth of the modern conservative movement that emerged in the late 1950s and 60s, which Reagan would later harness to win the White House.

Perhaps my most interesting find lay in the Stephen Vaughn Papers. Vaughn, a recently retired professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Madison, published a book on Reagan in Hollywood and kindly donated his papers to the Wisconsin Historical Society. In his papers was Reagan’s FBI file from his time as an informant on possible communists in the film and television industry. These papers provide an intimate insight not only of Reagan’s attitudes toward sympathizers, but also of the FBI’s fervent intent to root out any suspicion of anti-American feeling. These papers will prove invaluable to the completion of my doctoral thesis next summer.

Finally, while traditional narratives of conservatism argue that the Goldwater presidential nomination in 1964 was the breakthrough moment for conservatism and was later solidified by the Republican Party’s appeal to white, suburban voters began with the 1968 ‘southern strategy’, I consider this interpretation to be too shallow. Reagan’s neoliberal brand of color-blind conservatism that transformed the party had much deeper historical roots. Crucial to his ideology was a fixation on individualism, an issue catalysed by his personal experiences of the Hollywood ‘red scare’, which is why the papers of the ‘Hollywood Ten’, the HDC, and HICCASP have become so important to my doctoral project. These papers hold information vital to this huge historical moment in American history; the massive cultural shift away from collectivist politics typified by communism, which propelled the American conservative movement into the 1960s and their subsequent success.

I want to thank again Nicolas Ollivant, the awarding committee, and Rothermere American Institute for the fantastic opportunity to spend time in the city and the opportunity to pore over the fantastic archival holdings.

**TALENE BILAZARIAN**, WOLFSON COLLEGE

D.Phil. in Politics

*Award for research in Los Angeles and Boston*

With generous support from the Rothermere American Institute, I travelled to Los Angeles, California for a fieldwork trip as part of my larger doctoral work, which looks at how counter-extremism programs are delivered and received by communities in US and UK cities. I travelled to LA to understand if the larger factors driving subnational variation in cities in the UK could explain how these policies have played out in Los Angeles.

During my time in Los Angeles, I had an incredibly busy trip meeting with a wide range of stakeholders and academic observers to conduct 30 interviews during my visit. Interviews included meetings with senior leadership of the Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, as well as with the Los Angeles Mayor's Office. I was also able to speak to a wide range of non-government stakeholders including civil society leaders, civil liberties organizations, religious leaders, community members, and academic observers from University of Southern California and University of California at Los Angeles. These various meetings gave me rare insight into the history of LA's counter-terrorism programs—including its renowned community policing for counter-terrorism programs.

From this work, I was able to understand why counter-extremism programs also known as countering violent extremism (CVE) programs adapted from the UK played out in particular ways in Los Angeles. In common with my research in the UK, I find strong evidence to suggest that pre-existing network structures connecting civil society organizations with local government and law enforcement shape how various actors decide to deliver CVE programs. In LA, these strong network connections produced initial investment on the CVE agenda. However, these policies were later set aside, due to pressure by opposition groups which intensified after Donald Trump's inauguration and the administration's negative rhetoric toward Muslim American communities. The policy's trajectory in Los Angeles differs starkly from Boston, Massachusetts. In Boston, local law enforcement and civil society groups outright rejected counter-extremism policies from the start, motivated by the city's unique network dynamics.

I remain grateful to the benefactors of the Rothermere American Institute for generously funding research travel, which has made it possible for me to afford lodging in the Los Angeles area during my stay. My dissertation which focuses on how different cities deliver central government security programs is rapidly yielding new policy and academic insights. However, this work becomes expensive quickly as I need to travel across the US and the UK to speak to a range of stakeholders that directly experienced these programs. My ability to complete this work depends, not least, on support such as that of the Rothermere American Institute.

My doctoral work fits naturally with the Rothermere's goal of advancing comparative studies, by exploring how security programs play out in the US and the UK. My research points to numerous transatlantic connections—both between academics and policymakers—that highlight the importance of the Rothermere American Institute's larger mission.

**ALEX COCCIA, ST JOHN'S COLLEGE**

D.Phil. in Politics

*Award for research in Vinton, Athens, and Cuyahoga counties, Ohio*

Between August 6, 2018 and October 14, 2018, I conducted the first round of fieldwork for my D.Phil. thesis on poverty narratives in the United States. This trip was possible because of the generosity of the RAI and its benefactors, and I am incredibly grateful.

I interviewed individuals in the anti-poverty space throughout the state of Ohio – focusing specifically on areas of persistent poverty in Cleveland, Columbus, and around Athens County. My interviews were with individuals from community action agencies (i.e. federally funded social service providers), think tanks, professional associations, community development groups, philanthropic foundations, community organizing groups, faith-leaders, and legal advocates. Ultimately, I was trying to understand how different organizations involved in anti-poverty work in Ohio conceive of the causes of poverty and the capacity of those experiencing poverty. I learned a great deal about the institutional relationships that manage sources of funding for anti-poverty programs in Ohio, the history of Ohio's welfare reform efforts, and the challenges to sustained anti-poverty policy in areas of persistent poverty.

The narratives that were told in Ohio accurately reflect the national-level tension between structural accounts of poverty and notions of individual failings as the cause. Differences were noted in the level of ambition for anti-poverty policy: should policy be aimed at ending poverty or simply alleviating some of it? It was also evident that institutional constraints matter a great deal to the effectiveness of anti-poverty policy moving away from the consistent debates. For example, the vast majority of those interviewed voluntarily brought up the change that Ohio made in the 1990s to implement term limits. Those who had been active in the anti-poverty space for some time lamented these changes because they argued that it meant the conversations about what works and what does not work repeat themselves over the two-year cycles. One remarked, "I haven't heard a new idea in 15 years."

Another consistent theme was the variety of barriers individuals face for being able to get out of poverty, but how rarely things were framed as why people find themselves in poverty in the first place. This continually frames the debates about poverty as exceptions rather than rules, despite evidence that the majority of Americans will experience life below the federal poverty line or have income-insecurity at some point in their lives.

A third consistent theme was the prevalence of the 'poverty debate' as a proxy for the debate over the proper role of government and the proper role of the private sector. Additionally, and perhaps not surprising was how little the topic of race came up in conversation until prompted by interview questions. In Ohio, poverty that is persistent is also quite segregated, even within urban centers with large populations of poor white Ohioans and poor black Ohioans. Despite Columbus having a history of redlining, the legacy of racism did not feature in discussions of current policy solutions.

I will be returning to conduct a second round of fieldwork in the Spring, focusing interviews on elected officials and individuals experiencing poverty. I am grateful to RAI and its benefactors for their support.

**EMMA DAY**, PEMBROKE COLLEGE

D.Phil. in History

*Award for research at the Library of Congress and the National Archives, and at the National Library of Medicine, Maryland*

With the generous support of a Rothermere American Institute Postgraduate Travel Award, I spent Michaelmas Term of 2018 carrying out research for my DPhil project at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and other nearby libraries such as the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland. The research trip was greatly beneficial to the development of my PhD, as I finished the research component of my DPhil project, wrote, and shared my research with other academics. I am extremely grateful to the RAI for their financial support, without which this research trip, which is vital to the completion of my DPhil, would not have been possible.

I travelled to Washington, D.C. in September to begin a three-month British Research Council Fellowship at the John W. Kluge Center at the Library of Congress. During my fellowship, I made use of the Library's extensive collections for my doctoral research, which examines the role and treatment of women in the HIV and AIDS epidemic in the United States from the 1980s to the present day. I consulted the recordings of television shows such as *Ask Dr Ruth*, a programme that aired in the 1980s in which sex therapist Dr Ruth Westheimer discussed contemporary sexual health issues such as HIV and AIDS with the public; a series of images documenting the individual impact of the epidemic taken by photographers and photojournalists in the 1980s and 1990s as well as state and national public health posters from the prints and photographs collection; and the feminist and LGBT periodicals *Sinister Wisdom*, *Out/Look*, and *Trouble and Strife*. I also spent time examining the papers of Dr Charles Everett Koop, Surgeon General of the United States between 1982 and 1989 at the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda. This material will contribute to my overall dissertation, helping me to examine what impact AIDS has had on women since the 1980s.

My time spent living in the D.C. area also coincided with a number of political developments that overlapped with my research interests. In addition to a midterm election that saw a historic number of women and LGBT candidates elected to Congress, in early October, the US Congress confirmed federal judge Brett Kavanaugh as Supreme Court Justice. The vote followed a heated confirmation process in which a number of women accused Kavanaugh of sexual misconduct and both Democrats and Republicans sought to clarify his views on legalised abortion. In the days leading up to the vote, thousands of protestors gathered outside the Supreme Court in the US Capitol to demand that politicians hear and take seriously women's accounts of sexual abuse, violence, and harassment a year after the Time's Up and Me Too movements demonstrated their prevalence. The circumstances surrounding the Kavanaugh protests resonated with many of the themes of my research, in particular how women in the past have made demands for sexual freedom and reproductive agency against the backdrop of national battles over the legality of abortion and the state control of women's bodies.

**ANGELICA DE VIDO, ORIEL COLLEGE**

D.Phil. in English

*Award for research at the Fales Library, New York University, and the Herstory Archives, Brooklyn*

I am extremely grateful to the Rothermere American Institute and its benefactors for granting me a Postgraduate Travel Award, which allowed me to conduct a research trip to New York, USA from 31 August-7 September 2018. This trip provided me with an essential insight into American feminist activism of the post-1990 era, and the socio-political context underpinning my DPhil thesis research.

During this trip, I visited the Riot Grrrl Collection at New York University Fales Library, to investigate representations of adolescent female sexuality in the movement's zine publications between the years 1990-2001. This was hugely beneficial to my research, as it has allowed me to analyse how the literary texts that I am examining for my DPhil thesis have been influenced by and have engaged with the rhetoric of adolescent female sexual empowerment as promoted by the Riot Grrrl movement. In addition to viewing the Riot Grrrl zines, whilst at the Fales Library I also explored the Collection's range of material on the feminist and queer activism of the 1990s and early 2000s that was inspired by the Riot Grrrl movement, including the Ladyfest 2000 archive and the Outpunk archive material. This has allowed me to map and analyse the cultural ramifications of this political movement, and to investigate how this activism has also influenced the literature under investigation in my DPhil research. I also visited New York Public Library's zine collection, which contained a number of zines from the 1990s that were inspired by the Riot Grrrl movement. These zines allowed me to develop my insight into adolescent experience during this decade, and to compare the diversity of girls' experiences during the post-1990 era. In addition to including my archival work in my DPhil thesis, I will also use these archival findings to prepare a conference paper to present at the SASA conference in Atlanta in March 2019.

In addition to researching zines, on my trip I also visited the Museum of Modern Art's Special Collections to view Bruce Davidson's 1959 photography collection, *The Brooklyn Gang*. This collection was pivotal in shaping the dominant cultural iconography of American youth, and this term I will be writing a DPhil chapter that explores how authors engage with this iconography in the 1990s to explore American girlhood, and to rewrite traditionally masculine trajectories of adolescence to instead examine emancipatory narratives of girlhood. Therefore, being given the opportunity to view this photography collection, which is not on public display, was a fantastic experience that has greatly enriched my research for the term ahead.

Whilst in New York, I was able to visit a number of museums whose collections' are pertinent to my DPhil research, including the National September 11 Museum, and the Elizabeth A Sackler Centre for Feminist Art at Brooklyn Museum. The National September 11 Museum's exhibitions surrounding the cultural representation of the tragedy were extremely useful for my research on post-9/11 girlhood, which I will be writing up into a thesis chapter during this academic year. The Elizabeth A Sackler Centre's collection of Guerrilla Girl Art was extremely interesting to view alongside my Riot Grrrl research, as this was a feminist movement that ran parallel to the Riot Grrrls, and used similar rhetoric and iconography. It was therefore a very useful point of comparison for my research when considering broader American feminist and political activism of the post-1990 era.

I was initially due to visit the Herstory Archives in Brooklyn. However, renovations on the building meant that my appointment was cancelled, and I was unable to make an alternative appointment as the Archives are run by volunteers, who were unfortunately not able to open the Archives during my visit to the city. Instead, I was able to visit the LGBT National History Archives at The Center, where I viewed the collections on LGBT activism in the late 1980s-early 1990s, and the development of the Youthquake publication and adolescent activism. This provided me with excellent insight into LGBT adolescent experience and activism during this time in the US, which has provided key contextual information for my paper on lesbian girlhood during the post-1990 era, which I will be presenting at the IGSA conference in Chicago in February 2019.

In addition to conducting archival research, I was also able to visit many of the historical locations that were key during 1990s third wave feminist activism. These includes 91 Leonard Street, where the Riot Grrrl NYC chapter met and held rallies, and the many venues where the Riot Grrrl bands performed and disseminated their zines – including, most famously, Irving Plaza and CBGB.

The materials that I was able to see on my trip to New York have allowed me to set my textual analysis against the broader socio-political and cultural landscape of young American women's lives in the late twentieth century, and have enabled me to explore the contextual factors that have shaped the novels under exploration in my DPhil research. I once again extend my greatest



thanks to the RAI's benefactors for making possible this Postgraduate Travel Award, which has greatly enriched my DPhil research and my understanding of American life, history, and culture.

**SAGE GOODWIN**, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

D.Phil. in History

*Award for research at the Paley Media Center, NY, the University of Texas, and the King Library and Archive, Atlanta*

Thanks to the very generous benefactors of the RAI Postgraduate Travel award I was able to undertake research in New York and Austin, Texas this past Summer. The material that I found will make a very valuable contribution to my D.Phil thesis on television news coverage of the struggle for black freedom in the United States. It may also allow me to write a further article on the relationship between the three main television networks (CBS, NBC, and ABC), and the Johnson administration.

Television news footage is a surprisingly difficult source to access as the networks did not begin archiving their daily and evening news footage until 1968. Furthermore, what footage they did keep is held in in-house archives which are not open to the public (including researchers). Therefore, the historian of television news in the pre-1968 period has to use their cunning to root out their source material from elsewhere. Luckily the digital archive of the Paley Media Center in New York has significant broadcast holdings that cover civil rights. Thus New York was the first stop on my research trip. Here I spent a number of days in a dimly lit room on West 52<sup>nd</sup> street reliving the assassination and funeral of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the live coverage of which was shown for seven hours on CBS News.

Next I headed to Austin, Texas home of the Dolph Briscoe Center of American History, which has one of the world's largest and best collections relating to the news media, and the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library. Incidentally and conveniently for my purposes, they happen to be located right next to each other in a Northern corner of the University of Texas at Austin campus. At the Briscoe, I spent a week delving into the papers of leading CBS News anchorman Walter Cronkite. With over 50 boxes of viewer mail, this collection gave me the perfect insight into what American audiences of all ages and backgrounds thought about the African American struggle for freedom as it played out in their living rooms (as well as their particularly strong feelings about the evening news presenter's change of spectacles and his pronunciation of the word 'February'.)

For the final three weeks of my archival trip I visited the LBJ Library. Here, I went through many boxes of the White House Central Files, Lady Bird Johnson's personal diary, a mountain of public opinion mail, and the records of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (the Kerner Commission). I now have the primary sources I need to piece together a picture of how the president who passed the Civil and Voting Rights Acts and his administration interacted with

the television networks and how television news coverage affected federal policy towards civil rights.

My research this summer has been instrumental to the work I will complete over the course of this year. I would like to reiterate my sincere thanks to the benefactors for making my trip possible.

**MAYA KORNBERG, WOLFSON COLLEGE**

D.Phil. in Politics

*Award for research in Washington D.C.*

Thanks to the generosity of the Rothermere American Institute, I was able to travel to Washington D.C. to complete research interviews for my Dphil thesis on the American Congress. I am entering the third year of a Dphil in politics at Oxford.

My research focuses on congressional committees as the major public platform in which outside witnesses in different fields inform congresspeople on specific issues. My work explores the question of how listening to different types of perspectives affects committee members. I focus on a sample of four committees: Senate Foreign Relations, Senate Commerce, House Agriculture, and House Science. I employ both qualitative and quantitative data. My qualitative analysis is based on interviews with committee members, witnesses, and staff.

This was my second round of fieldwork in Washington D.C. and I conducted several important interviews that illuminated angles I had not heard on my first trip. During this trip to D.C. I was able to interview several Congresspeople including the Ranking Member of the Science Committee, and the only PhD Scientist in Congress. I was also able to interview two Senators, including a two-time Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committees, and a Senator who served on three of the four committees I study and is now a senior member of minority leadership. These were the first two Senators I was able to interview for my research and the interviews were tremendously helpful. In addition, I spoke to lobbyists and staff who further shed light on the committee process.

These interviews were instrumental in building my theory on committee hearings. They provided data on staff learning, lobbyist involvement in the hearing process, the chairmanship, the relationship between the chairman and the ranking member and the effect on the committee, the trouble academics encounter in trying to communicate their work through committees, the difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives and many other issues crucial to answering my research question.

This second trip would not have been possible without the Rothermere American Institute travel grant. I am very grateful for the generous support of the Rothermere American Institute.

**GRACE MALLON**, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

D.Phil. in History

*Award for research at the Georgia Historical Society and the State Archives of Tennessee*

In August 2018 I took advantage of my RAI travel grant to make my first proper foray into the American South, spending one week at the Tennessee State Library and Archives, right by the capitol building in downtown Nashville, and another at the Georgia Historical Society, whose grand quarters overlook Savannah's famous Forsyth Park. My thesis on the interactions of state governments with each other and with the federal government in the earliest decades of the new American nation will be based on legislative records and politicians' correspondence. I applied to visit Tennessee and Georgia in the hope that I could draw my material not only from the big states and the big names – Virginia, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania; Jefferson, Adams, Wilson – but from all of the states, including those teetering on the edge of the uncertain early American empire, and from the lives of politicians who might not occupy centre stage in traditional narratives of national development, but whose written remains can help to illuminate how Americans went about governing their new federal union on a day-to-day basis.

During the course of my trip I was able to examine the extant records of the Georgia assembly, especially from the 1780s, and the papers of assemblyman, US congressman, and later Georgia governor James Jackson, who was also an important militiaman during and after the Revolution. In Tennessee I was able to read the records of the territorial and state legislatures from 1794 to 1800, and to read the official correspondence of governors William Blount and John Sevier. My examination of these sources has suggested several conclusions about the realities of governing in the 1780s and '90s. The US Constitution, ratified 1789, indicates that states were meant to interact with the federal government by sending representatives to Congress, where they could press the agendas of their particular states and contribute to national policy. The Constitution, and subsequent Congressional legislation, also tried to reserve the management of Indian policy to the federal government. My archival findings suggest that both of these initiatives were unsuccessful. Governors – at least on the frontier – found themselves in what might be considered a diplomatic relationship with the federal government, trying to negotiate with the Secretary of War and local federal commissioners to influence federal Indian policy, especially when the state's representatives failed to get the job done in Congress. Legislators sent streams of 'remonstrances' to Congress to complain about their failure to act in the face of what were perceived as serious crises. Governors, militia officers, and state legislators appear to have broken federal law with abandon in their attempts to negotiate bilateral agreements with Indian nations. While these findings may be unsurprising to historians of Indian affairs, they begin to break down the obsessive focus of historians of the early national government on the intentions of the framers and later lawmakers, and to show that in studying government, the letter of the law itself forms only a small part of the picture.

My visit to the South allowed me to stand where my subjects had stood – in fields of cotton and colonial city streets – and to hold in my own hands the letters they wrote to friends, family, and

colleagues almost 250 years ago. I am immensely grateful to the benefactors of the Rothermere American Institute for this opportunity, which allowed me to access resources otherwise inaccessible to me, and the experience of which will lend so much colour to my historical writing.

**CHRISTOPH NITSCHKE, KEBLE COLLEGE**

D.Phil. in History

*Award for research at the Library of Congress and the National Archives, Washington D.C.*

With my DPhil project at an advanced stage, the purpose of the grant awarded to me was to attend one conference and one workshop and to wrap up archival research in the United States. I am extremely grateful for the generous support by the Rothermere American Institute and its benefactors which has made this trip possible.

My dissertation deals with the origins of the Panic of 1873 from a diplomatic, economic, and business history perspective. I argue that American private bankers of the 1860s and 70s learned to capitalise on associations with national glory during the Civil War, and consequently linked their transnational business to the nation's pursuit of international credibility and creditability. They thus acted as "brokers of foreign relations" between the United States and Europe and stood at the heart of the political-economic origins of crisis. Gilded Age financial crises were international events, born out of specific transatlantic relations and rooted in Americans' attempts to harness sweeping global changes.

My actors are border-crossing bankers, boosters, and businessmen who interacted with consuls, diplomats, and other government officials. Most of these activities happened in Europe, where Americans contacted both fellow compatriots and local financial and political elites. It was therefore particularly useful to present a paper to an audience of transatlantic specialists. My contribution at the Transatlantic Studies Association Annual Conference at the University of North Georgia was well received. Other papers, meanwhile, gave me reason to think about the broader context of private actors seizing state functions; in conversation, one conference participant in particular provided an illuminating example of deregulation processes in more recent European history. The Transatlantic Studies Association awarded me a £150 young scholars bursary.

Archival research in Washington DC followed the conference in Georgia. I split time between two institutions. At the Library of Congress Manuscript Division and the National Archives and Records Administration, I was looking for additional material for the last two chapters of my dissertation. During my last trip to the Library of Congress, my research was unfortunately cut short by a government shutdown of several days, so I viewed several leftover boxes which I had already identified as promising. Among these, letters in the Benjamin Bristow papers stand out. Bristow was the Secretary of the Treasury from 1874-76 and will be central to the last chapter and epilogue of my dissertation. Other insightful material included business correspondence

between the American and the English branches of the renowned Brown Brothers financial house. At the National Archives, one tremendously valuable finding was a register book of letters received, which provided detailed summaries for correspondence between the Treasury and American bankers between 1871-75.

The last part of my travel in the United States was all about the larger relevance of historical thinking. Attending the Summer Seminar in History and Statecraft organised by the Clements Center for National Security at the University of Texas at Austin was certainly a highlight of the trip. Notwithstanding the beautiful and peaceful setting at Beaver Creek in Colorado, the week-long seminar was packed with intense debate on issues of national security from a historical perspective. High-profile speakers from all areas of government and academia gave inspiring talks on the advantages and, not least, responsibilities of scholars in policy-making. As an aspiring historian, this workshop definitely encouraged me to use public platforms like *The Conversation* to engage in present issues that overlap with my historical area of expertise.

This trip allowed me to present my work to an international audience, think deeply about the historian's role in statecraft (and my own professional future), and finish up research in archival collections which will be central to my last two chapters. Thanks to the RAI and its patrons, I can now turn to writing up my dissertation while preparing for postdoctoral applications.

**MITCHELL ROBERTSON**, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

D.Phil. in History

*Award for research at the National Archives, Washington D.C.*

After receiving a Rothermere American Institute Travel Grant, I have recently undertaken a month-long research trip to the United States of America to undertake research for my dissertation *The Afterlife of the Great Society*. My first stop in the USA was Washington D.C., where I undertook research at the National Archives in both Washington D.C ('Archives I') and College Park, Maryland ('Archives II'). This provided great material for my chapters on hunger and food stamps in my dissertation. I also returned to Georgetown University Law School to conduct research at the National Equal Justice Library, which provided great material for my chapters on the Legal Services Program. I had visited there before so it was good to strengthen my relationship with that institution.

While in D.C. I was also fortunate enough to meet two active participants in my dissertation. The first was a conservative appointee to the bureaucracy, who graciously provided me with an interview and an introduction to other bureaucrats and activists from my period. I also met Edgar Cahn, an activist for legal services and former speechwriter to Robert F. Kennedy, who invited me to his home to learn of the work he had done in the 1960s as well as the work he continues to do today, letting me sit in on a discussion with the law students he currently teaches.

After Washington, I travelled to Ann Arbor, Michigan, to research at the Gerald Ford Presidential Library. In addition to the RAI Travel Grant, my work at the GFPL was supported by that institution. The Ford Library research provided material on individuals who had worked in the Nixon Administration, as well as allowing me to carry on my narrative into the Ford years. Next was Austin, Texas, to undertake research at the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library. This research was centred on understanding the origin of my War on Poverty projects and I was pleasantly surprised with the amount of material that I was able to locate. I am now returning to Oxford with a great deal of incredibly useful primary material as I begin the third year of the dissertation. I am very grateful to the supporters and donors of the Rothermere American Institute for their support in my research and dissertation through the travel grant.

**STEPHEN SYMCHYCH, ST ANTONY'S COLLEGE**

D.Phil. in History

*Award for research at Harvard University Library, Smith College, MA, and the Library of Congress*

I am reporting on my use of the RAI's generous award for travel and research for the second year of my History D.Phil., 2018-19.

My goal while visiting the United States was to study private papers from a circle of citizens from the Harvard Class of 1798, particularly William Ellery Channing and Joseph Story. I have placed the lives of these men at the center of a study of New Englanders' political identity during the first decades of the nineteenth century, as they navigated from the Federal period through the so-called Era of Good Feelings, and into the Second Party System.

Thanks to the RAI travel grant, I was able to visit several collections that were new to me—the Channing papers at Harvard University's Houghton and Divinity School libraries, the Shaw and Hale papers at the Library of Congress, and the Story papers at the Clements Library at the University of Michigan. In addition, I was able to continue work on the William Smith Shaw collection at the Boston Athenaeum. In each venue, I spent several days photographing and filing images of personal letters to, from, and about my subjects.

At Harvard, reader's privileges permitted access to nearly the entire library system of the University. This allowed me to visit both the Houghton Library and the Divinity School to take a first look at the papers of William Ellery Channing, the eminent Unitarian minister. There, I found significant manuscripts that provided an unexpected and valuable window into Channing's development, including his views on abolition, British politics, and the deposition of Charles X.

While in the Boston area, I was also able to continue collecting documents from the extensive collection of William Smith Shaw's papers. His extensive correspondence with Arthur Maynard Walter, who was often visiting Britain and anxious to hear full reports of news from home, included incisive observations about their Harvard classmates – including Channing and Joseph Story—as well as useful commentary on political events, from his Federalist point of view.

From Boston, I went to Washington, DC, where I looked primarily at papers of Shaw, along with members of the Hale family. While the lion's share of Shaw's output is at the Boston Athenaeum, the Library of Congress's collection gave a much richer picture of his correspondence, including several letters to and from his Aunt Abigail.

The extraordinarily helpful staff at the Library of Congress suggested that another good site to visit would be the Clements Library at the University of Michigan, to which I made an unplanned visit. Not only was I able to see an under-used collection of Joseph Story's papers from his earlier years, but conversation with their director of manuscripts led me to a newly digitized collection of letters from a New York senator that I was able to refer to a colleague at RAI.

I am now in the position of transcribing many scores of letters that will be most useful over the upcoming year. As I do so, I remain grateful for the assistance that the Rothermere American Institute and its benefactors have given my research.

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## UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

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**BETHANY EVANS, ST ANNE'S COLLEGE**

B.A. in History

*Award for research at the Margaret Herrick Library, Los Angeles*

During my time at the Margaret Herrick Library I was able to work with the librarians to uncover and analyse a plethora of information about Ida Lupino, the only female film director in the late 1940s and 1950s, and the subject of my undergraduate History dissertation, 'The Life and Work of Ida Lupino'. During my research, I found photographs which captured her directing and visually represented a female working in a male dominated industry. I worked through the special collections, which contained information on censorship and the Production Code, original transcripts of interviews with annotations, private letters and film reviews. And finally, I made use of the library's collection of popular magazines from the period, which allowed me to discover a few articles written by Lupino herself. This trip has allowed me to analyse the primary sources necessary to write about a topic which is both rewarding, and one I am extremely passionate about. Therefore, I would like to thank the Rothermere American Institute and its benefactors for helping to fund my research trip.

**ANGUS HIGGINS**, HERTFORD COLLEGE

B.A. in History

*Award for research at the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.*

In the summer of 2018, the generosity of the Rothermere American Institute facilitated a trip to the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. to research my undergraduate dissertation. My dissertation examines the spread of proslavery imperialism through the U.S. Consular Service in Britain in the late 1850s. In particular, the thesis interrogates southern public diplomacy through the newspapers edited by proslavery consuls in order to disseminate and explore their ideas of race, political economy, and diplomacy.

An integral part of my research was examining the otherwise inaccessible letters of diplomats contained in the Library of Congress, which gave an intimate and revealing look into the way in which these individuals conceptualised imperialism, trade, slavery and the place of the US in the world more broadly. Especially useful were the papers of William L. Marcy, whose correspondence with George Mifflin Dallas and James Buchanan was extensive. The opportunity to examine these letters not only enabled me to assemble a key body of evidence for my research, but also proved incredibly interesting in demonstrating the processes by which Southern and Northern diplomats co-existed and differed within the national framework.

Further, my time at the Library of Congress also enabled me to read the letters exchanged between George Mifflin Dallas and John H. C. Claiborne, as well as the notebooks of J. C. Bancroft Davis, the American correspondent for the Times between 1854 and 1861. The ability to examine this broad range of primary material which I otherwise would have been simply unable to engage with was invaluable, providing a broader context not only to the way in which leading diplomats grappled with issues of slavery and US foreign policy but also offering insight into the processes by which such concerns translated into the public domain and media of the newspaper.

Overall, not only did the travel grant give me the opportunity to study sources which are of integral importance to my research, it also facilitated a trip to Washington D.C. which brought to life and illustrated what was at stake in American diplomacy of the 1850s. Spending time in the US capital made emphatic the extent to which America's place in the world, had it taken the course envisioned by proslavery Southern diplomats, could have been so tragically different. As such, I would like to express my thanks once more to the travel awards committee at the RAI for enabling me to undertake such a productive and enjoyable trip.

**ISAAC SMY**, ORIEL COLLEGE

B.A. in History

*Award for research at the Tamiment Library, New York University*

The undergraduate course allows History students to study, and write 12,000 words on, something of particular interest to the student. As such, after studying the American Progressive



Era in the beginning of my second-year and finding it enjoyable, I decided to dedicate my thesis to the topic. Generally, I was interested in the role of the working-class within the movement, given that previous literature on the topic had given little attention to this group; it is a common theme across such works to assume a middle-class hegemony over influencing the Era.

With this general view of the topic in hand, I focussed more specifically on the construction industry; the beginning of the twentieth century saw a dramatic modernisation within the industry, and an astonishing burst of activity in specific regional areas. Given the industry was so dynamic and prominent within the period, it made sense to make this the focus of my research. Indeed, given New York was the United States' hub of construction activity during the time-period, it made sense to use the city as a geographical confine.

I was particularly interested to see to what extent, if any at all, the city's working class influenced the progression of their own condition in the Era through their participation in formal relations with employers, as well as any influence they had on government legislation, court judgements and international unions. Conversely, I also wanted to see how these factors influenced the working class.

As a result of the generosity of the Rothermere American Institute, I was able to visit the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives in New York City and spend five days studying in their Tamiment Library. Much of what I had access to were the contracts between the city's labour unions and the city's primary employer association, the Building Trades Employers' Association. Similarly, I had access to arbitration documents between labour unions and employers for when a party to an agreement disputed the other's adherence to said agreement. Importantly, I had access to the minutes of a meeting when both employers and labour unions agreed to submit themselves to an Arbitration Plan which dictated the relations between the two, and the conditions to which the parties operated under. Access to these records was vital in establishing the conditions labour unions worked under, how they achieved such conditions, and indeed to what extent the working-class – through labour unions – impacted these formal relations in the city.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to the Rothermere American Institute and their munificent benefactors for providing me with the funds I needed to visit the archives. Without them, my understanding of the construction industry in New York would be substantially inferior; so much so, I would not have been able to pursue my interests and produce a thesis that I thoroughly enjoyed researching.

**JESSICA WALLACE**, TRINITY COLLEGE

B.A. in History

*Award for research at the New York Public Library and the Brooklyn Public Library*

Over the summer of 2018, I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to New York City to undertake vital research for my undergraduate History thesis. My thesis is concerned with

exploring and elevating the role of activism within the arts communities of New York City during the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and '90s. I spent most of my time in the Manuscripts and Archives Division of the New York Public Library, which holds over 100 collections relating to the history and culture of gay men and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and which provided me with an incredible wealth of primary material. An example of such materials are their extensive records on the 'Estates Project for Artists with AIDS', an organisation focused on preserving the heritage and cultural legacy of artists with AIDS, and enacting a systematic effort to provide vital financial support. I had access to administrative information, as well as legal records and primary data on their work with different artists. I also worked in the archives of the Brooklyn Public Library, which house a wealth of primary sources and data specifically relating to Brooklyn.

My research here crucially elucidated the disparities between the crisis in Manhattan and Brooklyn, through documentation including government reports, community health profiles, newspapers and the reports of various aid organisations. New York is, of course, also home to some of the greatest collections of art in the world, which my focus on the arts permitted me to take advantage of. An exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art, 'David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night', was incredibly relevant to thesis; Wojnarowicz was an artist living with AIDS in the late 1980s and early 1990s, who utilised his art and network within the artistic community to build a canon of propagandistic, provocative work illustrating the tragic reality of the AIDS experience, and advocating for better government responses. The exhibition was hugely informative, and seeing David's work in person was both beautiful and upsetting. In the Whitney's permanent collection they also display some of the AIDS posters produced as part of the 'Gran Fury' poster campaign, which I discuss at length in my thesis, and some of which I also got to handle personally in the New York Public Library archives. During my time in New York I also saw works by relevant artists like Keith Haring, Robert Mapplethorpe, Frank Moore and Robert Blanchon, the art and activism of whom I explore in my thesis. More generally, I visited the Museum of the City of New York, which had displays on the impact of AIDS on New York and the history of gay activism in the city.

New York is a very expensive destination, and the financial support provided by the Rothermere American Institute was vital in making my research trip possible. The exploration and analysis of primary source material is of fundamental importance for a historical thesis, and the opportunity to investigate social experience in the local communities AIDS affected was invaluable and an incredible opportunity.