

THE RAI IS THE SEAT OF OXFORD'S CONVERSATION WITH AMERICA. IT IS THE FOREMOST ACADEMIC INSTITUTION FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN US HISTORY, CULTURE AND POLITICS BEYOND AMERICA'S SHORES.



All photos: John Cairns

Annual Report 2012-13

RAI

ROTHERMERE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
AMERICA'S HOME AT OXFORD





Director's Foreword

It is a pleasure and a privilege to introduce the RAI's 2012-13 Annual Report showing the exceptional breadth and depth of activity here over the past academic year. Before setting out my colleagues' achievements, let me thank them all – students, fellows, visiting and permanent faculty, and administrative colleagues – who make the RAI what it is for students of America: the very best place to be and to work.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to my colleagues on the RAI's Executive Committee, especially to Professor Desmond King, FBA, who has decided to stand down from the committee's chairmanship this summer after ten years in post. I thank him for his strong support of the Institute, for his intellectual leadership, and his wise counsel. Desmond will be replaced by Professor Neil MacFarlane, a distinguished scholar of international relations and a powerful advocate of the RAI within the University and beyond.

The RAI benefits immeasurably from the invigorating presence of our visiting fellows and especially from the Harmsworth and Winant Professors. We have in 2012-13 enjoyed the intellectual company of Gary Gerstle as Harmsworth Professor of American History, of George Edwards as Winant Professor of American Government, and of Celeste-Marie Bernier, Erin Penner, Maria Fanis and Barbara Reeves-Ellington as Visiting Fellows. Their interests range from Gary's current work on the uses (and abuses) of public power in the United States from the Revolution to the present, to George's on American presidential leadership, to Celeste's innovative research (and, in 2012, a prize-winning publication) on images and conceptualizations of major figures in anti-slavery politics and movements, to Maria's work on the means by which domestic discourses about the nation-state are implicated in states' foreign policy choices, to Erin's on the novels of William Faulkner and Virginia Woolf, and to Barbara's on American migration and missionaries.



Alain Locke symposium

Breadth of activity has been equally apparent in the Institute's international conferences. Among them have been those on US and Canadian support for think tanks in Africa; the Winant Professor's conference 'Governing the United States in Polarized Times'; Tom Cutterham's history conference to mark the centenary of Charles Beard's *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*; the postgraduate literature conference on 'American Work'; a joint conference with the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University and the Reuters Institute, Oxford, 'Transparency and Accountability in the Media'; an outstanding symposium on 'Alain Locke in the 21st Century' to celebrate and explore the first African-American



Photo: Rob Judges

Rhodes Scholar and 'father of the Harlem Renaissance'; and a highly successful colloquium held jointly with Nuffield College on a timely and salient topic – the nature and governance of the Federal Reserve System.

Smaller events – lectures, workshops, and special seminars – heighten the Institute's responsiveness to emerging

themes in American academic and public life. The inaugural lectures of the Harmsworth and Winant professors, given by two colleagues at the pinnacle of the academic profession, each dealt with such themes. Gary Gerstle, who made a formidable impact in his year at the Institute, spoke to a large audience on a question close to the heart of American historians' concerns and of popular discussion: how can the US be so liberal and illiberal at the same time? Professor Gerstle locates this paradox in the dialectic between the ideology of republicanism (by which he means individual rights being regarded as prior to other considerations) and the police power (by which the states have the right to protect perceived threats to the common good arising from an individual or institution).

In an illuminating Winant inaugural lecture, George Edwards sought to replace the notion of the 'persuasive president' with that of the 'strategic president'. The lecture examined Obama's presidency in light of George's contention that the most important difference between successful and unsuccessful presidential strategies turns upon whether the incumbent president identifies and exploits existing political opportunities.

Other lectures have been no less stimulating. Bill Burns, only the second serving US Foreign Service Officer in American history to have risen to the position of Deputy Secretary of State, gave a magnificent and subtle account of America's diplomatic challenges across the world. It was a great pleasure to be able to organize Bill's visit jointly with colleagues at St John's College, where Bill is an alumnus and Honorary Fellow.



Photo: John Cairns

We were delighted to welcome Michael Malone, doyen among writers on California's high-tech companies and culture, who spoke compellingly and provocatively to a captivated audience about 'The Triumph of the Humanities'. His theme was that the new economy of northern California and the world's other most dynamic regions requires the qualities of creativity, imagination, and lateral thinking that characterize the humanities. Those qualities are, as Michael observed, precisely those that the RAI exemplifies and advances.

Among the many other fine lectures at the RAI this past year, Professors Barry Supple and Avner Offer explored the major inferences that they have drawn from their distinguished careers spent studying the American economy, while Donald Drakeman fascinatingly shed new light on the separation of church and state in the US.



The end of the academic year witnessed a thrilling 'first' for the Institute – a theatrical performance of 'Southern Discomfort'. Straight from an Off-Broadway run, and performed and written by Oxford alumna Elizabeth Gray, her vignettes of Southern life captivated a large audience basking in glorious early-evening

sunshine in the RAI's garden. We hope to make theatre at the RAI an annual highlight in summers to come.

A compelling highlight of the year was Sir John Elliott's inaugural lecture in the Atlantic History lecture series, given early in Trinity Term. In recognition of his exceptional contribution not just to the development of Atlantic History, but to the creation and intellectual power of the RAI, the series is appropriately named after Sir John himself. No scholar has done more to explain the history of the Atlantic and the nations and empires that have bordered it than he has done. His lecture, *Spanning the Atlantic*, comprised a typically elegant and powerful argument for thinking about American development in the contexts of the hemisphere, the Atlantic, and the empires of those worlds. Pekka Hämäläinen, who has had an immense impact in his first year as Rhodes Professor, interviews Sir John elsewhere in these pages. The story told there is a remarkable insight into why Atlantic History has such magnetism for many modern historians of North America.

Sir John's launch of the Atlantic Lecture series reminded the audience of a major theme in the RAI's intellectual history. But it also pointed to the Institute's desire to raise endowment funding for a graduate studentship in Atlantic History as part of its wider objective of endowing graduate studentships in all of the subjects within the RAI's academic purview.

Earlier in the academic year, Peter Onuf, Harmsworth Professor of American History in 2008-2009, gave a brilliant lecture for the RAI to a group of current donors and other friends of the Institute in New York on the subject of 'Jefferson and the Special Relationship'. Peter's bold argument kept his audience rapt, and appreciative of the occasion as an example of some of the very best work done at the RAI.

It is right that the RAI should invite some of its most distinguished people to speak before audiences beyond – and often well beyond – Oxford both because the quality of thinking at the RAI about America is outstanding, and because the Institute needs to become even more widely known among those who might recognize the importance of sustaining and building upon the RAI's exceptional activity. We intend to hold more such events, not least to spread the word of the power and purpose of the RAI's academic community.

Thanks to the generosity of two donors and to the opportunity presented by the University's matched funding scheme for graduate scholarships, we have this year received pledges to endow one graduate studentship in American history, and for a major and very welcome donation to the Institute's general endowment. Such philanthropy redoubles our resolve to build upon the successes that the Campaign for the RAI has already achieved, to generate more outstanding graduate research in American history, politics, and literature, and to accomplish the crucially important task of raising endowment for the Directorship – as well as funding postdoctoral research fellowships, and the academic programme itself.

Together with Dr Huw David, the RAI's Development Officer; our generous donors, and our invaluable advisers on the Advisory Board in the UK, Europe, and the US, our target of raising £8 million by the summer of 2015 remains firmly within our sights. If we meet it, the RAI's future as a unique global institution for explaining how America has come to be what it is and why it does what it does will be assured. On that happy prospect, I invite you to reflect in the pages of this report on another year of thrilling achievements here at the RAI, America's Home at Oxford.



Graduate studentships

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous benefactor, the RAI has again been able to offer financial support to graduate students undertaking exceptional work in American history and politics. Tom Cutterham has just completed a three-year award for his thesis on Federalism and Anti-Federalism in the early American republic; Nadia Hilliard, Mandy Izadi and Steve Tuffnell all received one-year awards to enable them to complete their doctorates. In 2012-13, these students were joined by two recipients of one-year awards in American literature, Stephen Ross and Edward Sugden, whose scholarships were made possible by the generosity of Esmond Harmsworth. In the reports below, recipients of each of the awards describe their research.

Tom Cutterham

This has been the third and final year of my scholarship at the RAI, and of my DPhil project. I spent much of this year writing my thesis and have also conducted a number of parallel projects. In Michaelmas Term I taught the honours course in early American history at Oxford Brookes University and at the beginning of Trinity Term organised a conference at the RAI to examine the 100th anniversary of the publication of Charles Beard's *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*, including participation from several prominent scholars.

Several publications are forthcoming in the coming year. First to appear will be my contribution to a forum on Charles Beard in the journal *American Political Thought*; then a chapter on imagery, irony, and metaphor in the videogame *Fallout 3*, in the volume *Playing with the Past: Digital Games and the Simulation of History* (Bloomsbury, 2013); then in early 2014 an article, 'The International Dimension of the Federal Constitution', in the *Journal of American Studies*.

I am looking forward to beginning as the Sir Christopher Cox Junior Research Fellow at New College, Oxford, in October. There I will be able to finish my thesis and adapt it for publication, as well as start on new projects. Among the first things I will do are adapt some of my current work into two articles: one on international law in the new American republic, the other on masculine identity and its relation to political and social thought at the end of the Revolutionary War.

Without the vital financial support of the RAI's three-year studentship I would not have been able to do any of this. Being part of the RAI community has been a fantastic experience – Oxford's American historians are very lucky!



Nadia Hilliard

I have been very fortunate to receive a half-studentship from the RAI, enabling me to focus on my dissertation and make strides in writing it. My thesis addresses the question of executive accountability in the American state. To what extent is there an effective institutional system of accountability

keeping the executive in check, and how has it evolved? The project is a historical inquiry into the sources and development of one mechanism of executive accountability.

My argument focuses on one particular statutory framework – the Inspector General Act of 1978 – and its interaction with other mechanisms of accountability. The IG system is a growing, but very understudied topic in American politics. I hope to contribute a much-needed account of the IG system's effect on the American bureaucracy.

I was able to make significant progress on the project this academic year. In past years I have had to supplement my income with a large amount of teaching and non-academic work, which hindered steady progress on my thesis. Because of the RAI studentship, this year I was able to make two field research trips to Washington, DC, to conduct interviews, and completed two substantial chapters and an introduction to my thesis.

Mandy Izadi

The RAI studentship has enriched every aspect of my intellectual development as a young historian. I cannot express in enough words the financial, intellectual, and personal significance of the meaning and the very real material support that the studentship has provided me.

Over the past academic year I have presented papers on three different occasions. In September 2012, I presented my paper



at Harvard University's conference on the Caribbean Diaspora Reconsidered. My presentation was entitled 'Muskogee State: Black-Indian Politics in the circum-Caribbean'. The opportunity enabled me to prepare my presentation for publication alongside some of the most prominent academics and proficient graduates in the field. My presentation (and the article) focused on Black politics in Florida's Indian country, while situating the paper's main actors (ex-slaves and Muskogee Indians) within the larger geo-political framework of the circum-Caribbean. My work contributes to the largest aims of the dissertation: to collapse the borders of Black and Indian histories, and to expand them outwards beyond the nation-state.

My ambition is to produce a dissertation, and eventually, a book, that will fundamentally alter academic conceptions of how Native American and African American histories relate to one another. To bridge this gap between subfields of American historiography, and to complete the work of my dissertation will be to fulfil my sense of obligation to the RAI and the benefactors of the studentship. I am confident that future recipients of RAI studentships will benefit as greatly as I have done.

Steve Tuffnell

Without the generosity of the RAI studentship I would not have had the time or financial resources to complete my doctoral thesis, entitled 'Nationalism, Cosmopolitanism and Empire in Britain's American Expatriate Community, c.1830–1914'.

I have also completed an article entitled 'Expatriation and Empire: The American Invasion of Britain and the Empire, c.1865–1914' for the journal *Britain and the World* and have presented my research at a number of conferences, including the inter-disciplinary 'Empires of Knowledge' at Ertegun House, Oxford; and the annual conference of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations in Washington DC. In addition, numerous book reviews have been published in *History*, the *Journal of American Studies*, *American Nineteenth Century History*, and the *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*.

The studentship also gave me the peace of mind to write and refine applications for job vacancies, research fellowships, and additional career development posts. These efforts were successful in that I have secured a visiting research fellowship at the Huntington Library, Pasadena, CA and have been awarded a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship for 2013–2016.

Stephen Ross

The RAI 4th-year studentship provided crucial support for the final months of writing and editing my doctoral thesis. Those extra months of institutional support made a huge difference to the final shape of my project, which examines the influence of western nature writing traditions on the poetry of John Ashbery.

Being a member of Oxford's vibrant Americanist community at the RAI has been one of the great pleasures of my postgraduate years. It has also provided me with invaluable professional training in the field of American literature – in September, I will start as a teaching fellow at Warwick University.

Over the past four years, I've been proud to participate in the RAI Americanist community in various capacities – as an organizer of the British Association for American Studies postgraduate conference in 2010, and as a co-founder of the American Literature Graduate Research Seminar. By providing the resources and encouragement for these and many other projects, the RAI has convened a series of dynamic, interdisciplinary debates about the past, present, and future of American literature.

Edward Sugden

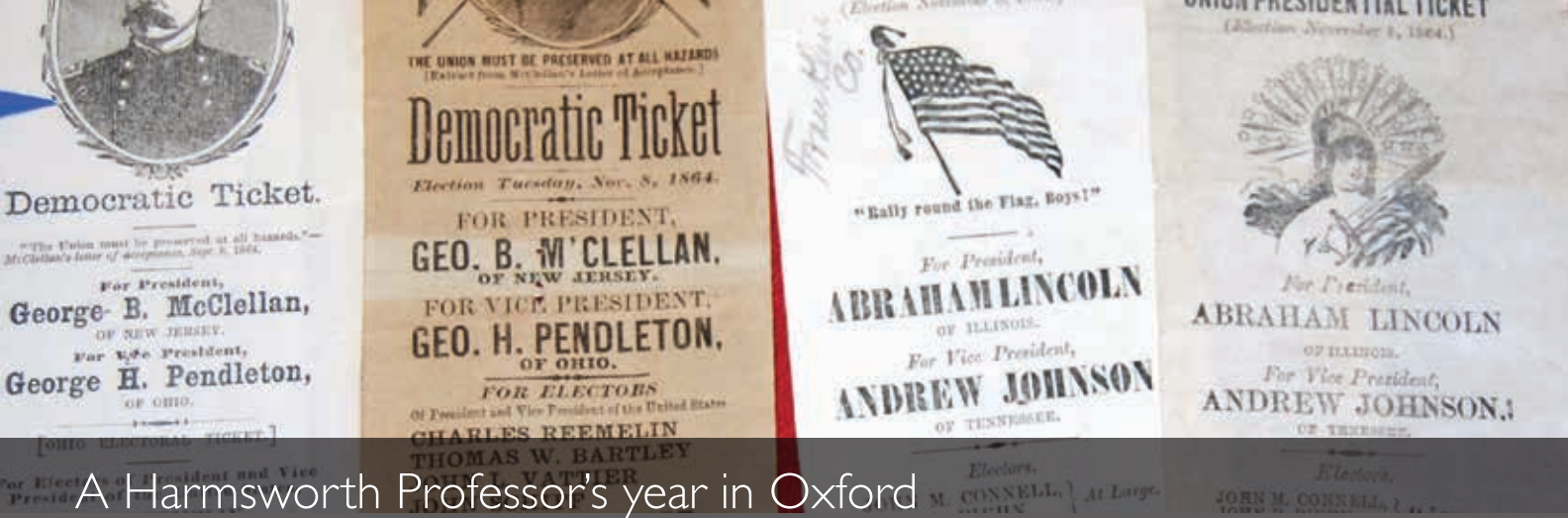
With the studentship, I have been able to make an exciting contribution to current American literary studies, examining how the early forces of globalization inflected representations of time in a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts. I depict the lives of antebellum American citizens as they experienced the frequently disorienting birth-pangs of modernity. The antebellum nation was neither post-colonial nor imperial, neither mercantile nor capitalist, and this definitional uncertainty meant that its writers generated divergent imaginings of the unsettled Revolutionary past and the unstable future.

The funding has also allowed me to participate in several exciting conferences and seminar series at the RAI too – I worked at the Alain Locke conference in 2012, and recently presented at a symposium dedicated to the theme of American Work. I have also secured a fellowship at the Huntington Library in California which will allow me to nuance my research further.

The studentship let me do all these things. The last year has provided me with a world of intellectual opportunity and my work has improved immeasurably for it.

"The RAI studentship has enriched every aspect of my intellectual development as a young historian. I cannot express in enough words the financial, intellectual, and personal significance of the meaning and the very real material support that the studentship has provided me."

Mandy Izadi



A Harmsworth Professor's year in Oxford

Gary Gerstle is James G. Stahlman Professor of American History and Professor of Political Science at Vanderbilt University. He reflects here on a year spent at the RAI as Harmsworth Visiting Professor of American History, 2012–13.

Almost forty years ago, while still an undergraduate, I spent a year at the London School of Economics, studying British and American history. It was a formative year for me, and it influenced my decision to become a historian. Since that time, I have always wanted to return to the UK for another year of study, hoping, perhaps, to experience some of the intellectual excitement of that earlier odyssey, and also to partake of the stimulation that comes from immersing oneself in a foreign culture. The Harmsworth Professorship has given me that opportunity. I am a different person from the callow youth who washed up on these shores four decades ago, and England, too, has become a different place. And, of course, Oxford is a rather unlike LSE! Nevertheless, my second year in the UK has partaken of the qualities that made the first special: ample opportunity to think, research, write, teach, and debate in an extraordinarily stimulating and diverse academic environment; and the chance to form strong bonds, intellectual and personal, that will enrich me and my work for years to come.

At the heart of this experience stands the RAI. Under the able directorship of Nigel Bowles, it has become the most dynamic center for the study of American history and politics in the UK. It bubbles over constantly with speakers, conferences, workshops – I, myself, attended more than thirty events there this year – of exceptional range and quality. During term, the traffic of faculty and post-graduates in and out of this building is thick, the intellectual exchanges lively. The three post-graduate courses I co-taught with Gareth Davies, Pekka Hämäläinen, and Peter Thompson involved me directly in the traffic and exchanges, and facilitated a remarkably quick and stimulating incorporation into the American history community at Oxford.

Of course, the RAI is only a small component of Oxford; part of the joy of the year derived from venturing beyond its walls to discover the many networks of scholars, inter-institutional and interdisciplinary, through which intellectual life at Oxford flows. The Harmsworth Professorship also offers its holder opportunities to travel across Britain and continental Europe and beyond to give lectures, to participate in conferences and workshops, and to meet a wide array of scholars. My travels took me to Trinity College Dublin, Queen's

University in Belfast, the University of Glasgow, and the University of Edinburgh; to Sheffield, Nottingham, Cambridge, University College London, LSE, and Sussex; to the Sorbonne, the Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, and Tel Aviv University; and to a variety of other institutions.

These many sources of intellectual stimulation, both at Oxford and beyond, proved very important in bringing my current book, *Governing America: Public Power from the Revolution to the Present*, to a successful conclusion. I was well into this project when I arrived in Oxford a year ago, but I had yet to solve some of its conceptual and narrative challenges. Now I believe I have. I will remember the RAI, Oxford, and the UK as the place where this project came of age.

So some thanks are in order: to Nigel Bowles and his capable staff at the RAI for maintaining so vital a center; to the Americanist community at Oxford for making me one of their own; to Queen's College, and its provost, Paul Madden, for nourishment and fellowship; to Oxford friends, new and old; and to Vyvyan and Alexandra Harmsworth, for their many kindnesses, good company, and dedication to the professorship that their family endowed and has so long sustained.

Gary Gerstle





Photo: John Cairns

Photo: John Cairns

Conference Call 2012–13

From ‘Transparency and Accountability in Government and Media’ to ‘Alain Locke in the 21st Century’, conferences at the RAI in 2012-13 again reflected the breadth of research and teaching that take place at the Institute. Other highlights included the inaugural Oxford-Yale Conference on Indigenous Studies and ‘Governing the Fed’, as the reports below reveal.

On his first day in office, President Obama issued a ‘Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government’ that emphasised that government should be transparent, participatory, and collaborative. David Cameron has similarly emphasized the value of widening access to government data. Open government commitments have also become part of international policy discussions. Many of these initiatives focus on data helpful to people in their role as consumers (rather than voters), or draw on knowledge from citizens or experts to aid the development of policies and regulations. **‘Transparency and Accountability in Government and Media’**, held at the RAI in October and organised jointly with Duke University, examined how transparency and open government initiatives have affected the accountability function of the press, and explored how policies in different countries could change to help journalists hold governments more accountable.

‘Governing the Fed’ brought international experts together to explore the nature and governance of the Federal Reserve Board. Hosted jointly with Nuffield College, Oxford, the conference was organised by Professor Desmond King, FBA, Mellon Professor of American Government at Oxford and Chair of the RAI’s Executive Committee, and Lawrence Jacobs, Mondale Chair for Political Studies at the University of Minnesota. Participants discussed papers such as ‘The Federal Reserve as Global Lender of Last Resort 2007-2010’ and ‘Continental Divide? Canada’s Experience during the Financial Crisis of 2008’.



Alain Locke

The RAI also hosted several literary conferences in 2012-13. **‘Alain Locke in the 21st Century’** featured papers and performances assessing the work of the distinguished American writer and philosopher and his relationship to Anglo-American culture. Locke was the first African-American Rhodes Scholar, coming to Oxford in 1907 after outstanding work at Harvard. He went on to a distinguished academic career and was one of the intellectual lights behind the rebirth of the black arts movement in the early 20th century. As well as editing the classic anthology, *The New Negro* (1925), Locke is often identified as the father of the Harlem Renaissance. The symposium considered Locke’s international influences, his intellectual legacy, and the project of

black institutionalism – all in the context of recent debate about what might constitute a black tradition in letters. **‘Modernist Magazines in the Americas’** celebrated the publication of the second volume of the *Oxford Critical & Cultural History of Modernist Magazines: North America 1894-1960*, and explored small magazines and their cultural contexts across the Americas. In May, some of the Institute’s outstanding doctoral students convened **‘American Work: A Literature Symposium’** for graduate students and early-career academics. The one-day event covered topics such as depictions of work within American literature – including the figure of the farmer; the pioneer; the planter; indentured servitude and slavery; the relationship between literature and the economy; and the labour of literature – how American authors have represented their profession and the work of writing.

‘Charles Beard, Economic Interpretation and History’ was organised by an exceptional RAI graduate student, Tom Cutterham, and commemorated the centenary of Beard’s *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*. Academics and doctoral researchers from across the world debated the legacy of Beard’s analysis of the role of foreign capital and commerce at the founding and in the course of American development, his attention to the economic basis of politics and society, and his internationalism. The first **Oxford-Yale Conference on Indigenous Studies** considered the transnational futures and possibilities of indigenous studies. Like many other fields of historical inquiry, indigenous history is experiencing a transnational turn, which is reconfiguring its spatial contours, periodization and methodologies. The conference assessed the prospects, possibilities and challenges – both intellectual and institutional – of this reimagining of indigenous history.

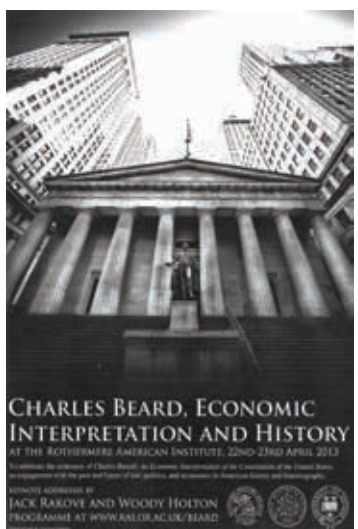




Photo: John Cairns

Reflections on a Literary Fellowship at the RAI

Celeste-Marie Bernier, Professor of African-American Studies at the University of Nottingham, joined the RAI as Senior Visiting Fellow for 2012-13. She reflects on a literary year at the RAI.

I am exceptionally grateful for having had the wonderful opportunity of spending the last year researching, writing, delivering lectures, inaugurating reading groups, establishing discussion forums, and organizing an international symposium at the RAI. Taking inspiration from the Institute's enriching intellectual environment, I completed the research and writing of my latest monograph, *Suffering and Sunset: War and Art in the Life of Horace Pippin*. The book began with the modest aim of editing the unpublished autobiographies of African-American World War I combat veteran and painter, Horace Pippin. These come to life in the smudged and torn pages of exercise books now yellowed and crumbling with age.

Preliminary research into Horace Pippin, let alone the history of Black World War I combat soldiers, soon confirmed that this was only part of the story. I recognized that vast amounts of work needed to be done and major archives consulted even to begin to do justice to Pippin's manuscripts no less than his paintings, sketches, and burntwood panels. Publishing Pippin's manuscripts as unaccompanied by new research into his biographical history or military service, let alone his developments as an artist would, I began to understand, leave unaddressed the political, social, historical, and artistic contexts fundamental not only to his life but to early twentieth century African American literary, cultural, and intellectual histories more generally. As the books show, Pippin remains as much a forgotten writer as painter; despite his importance one of the 20th century's most important artists.

Enjoying an array of wonderful events that I attended as part of the RAI's stellar academic calendar, I was privileged to have the chance to organize a series of events for academic staff members, fellows, and students. At the beginning of the year, I inaugurated an interdisciplinary group examining 'Race and Slavery in American Visual Culture'. Debating issues related to African American art and Black Diasporic visual cultures more generally, it met four times during the year. In recognition of the US annual commemoration of Black History Month in February, I gave a three-part public lecture series on 'The Body, Memory and Representation in Black Visual Culture', which included individual lectures titled, 'Imaging Slavery', 'Imagining Freedom?', and '(Re)Imaging (Re)Memory'. I also delivered

a special seminar on 'Representing Slavery in Living Parchments, Chattel Records, and Characters of Blood', and hosted a book launch for my recent monograph, *Characters of Blood: Black Heroism in the Transatlantic Imagination*.

My schedule of events at the RAI culminated in a two day international symposium, 'Visualizing Slavery: Art Across the Black Diaspora', for which I was generously awarded a Public Program Grant by the Terra Foundation for American Art. An unprecedented event in the UK, this symposium included numerous national and international African-American and Black British artists, curators, gallery owners, museum directors and intellectuals. Benefitting from my time at Oxford in yet other ways, I was also appointed an Academic Visitor at the History of Art department.



My time at the RAI has been a wonderful privilege and I am profoundly grateful for the generosity, kindness, and great friendship of Nigel Bowles, Sally Bayley, Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Gary Gerstle, Erin Penner, Maria Fanis, Huw David, Jane Rawson, and Ashley Morgan-Daniel, among many more other wonderful people who made my fellowship at the Institute a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience.

“Enjoying an array of wonderful events that I attended as part of the RAI's stellar academic calendar, I was privileged to have the chance to organize a series of events for academic staff members, fellows, and students”

Professor Celeste-Marie Bernier



Explaining Obama: Strategic Assessments and Presidential Leadership

George C. Edwards III is University Distinguished Professor of Political Science at Texas A&M University, where he also holds the Jordan Chair in Presidential Studies. He reflects here on his year at the RAI as John G. Winant Visiting Professor of American Government for 2012–13.



My research in recent years has focused on presidential leadership, and as Winant Professor I continued to focus on the Obama administration. In his first two years in office, Barack Obama governed on the premise that he could create opportunities for change by persuading the public and some congressional Republicans to support his major initiatives.

As a result, he proposed a large, expensive, and polarizing agenda in the middle of a severe economic crisis and did not make rigorous strategic assessments of the possibilities for leading the public or attracting Republican support. My previous work led me to predict that he would fail in both of these strategies for governing.

It turns out that President Obama's belief in his ability to persuade led him to overreach with his agenda and seek policy changes that alienated many Americans. This reaction led to a severe electoral defeat for the Democrats in the 2010 elections, undermining the president's ability to govern in the remainder of his term.

The experience of the Obama administration buttresses the view that presidential power is not the power to persuade and that the essence of successful presidential leadership is recognizing and exploiting existing opportunities, not in creating them. I have written on the president's third and fourth years in office and the leadership challenges facing any president in a highly polarized political environment.

Because of the considerable interest in the 2012 presidential and congressional elections, I spoke in a number of venues at Oxford and around Britain in Michaelmas Term 2012. These engagements included my inaugural Winant Lecture, 'Explaining Obama: Strategic Assessments and Presidential Leadership', and presentations on 'Exploring the Electoral College' and 'The 2012 Election Results', all at the RAI, the Praefectus Lecture at Balliol College on 'The Nature of Presidential Leadership', and a speech at the London School of Economics on 'Leadership and Governing in the Obama Presidency'. I also spoke at the Oxford Union on 'The 2012 Presidential Election', and to Balliol's Cerberus Society on 'Explaining the 2012 Election Results'.

In Hilary Term, I delivered the inaugural Neustadt Lecture at University College London, 'Explaining Leadership in the Obama Presidency'. I also chaired a session of the Congress to Campus programme at RAI. In Trinity Term, I hosted a conference on 'Governing in Polarized Times' at the RAI. I invited leading scholars and journalists to discuss the central issue of American politics and to seek to develop some solutions to the problem. The audience was composed of students and scholars at Oxford, who interacted frequently with the visitors. I also delivered the keynote address on 'Obama's Burden: Governing in Polarized Times' at a conference on 'The State of the Union' at the British Library, and spoke on 'Explaining Presidential Leadership' at the University of Swansea. Finally, I participated in the weekly seminar in which American politics students present their research.

I have found that Oxford in general and the Rothermere American Institute in particular is a place for me to develop new ideas. The relative lack of distractions for a visiting professor makes it easier to focus on articulating issues and developing an approach to solving them. I am most grateful for the opportunity that the Winant Professorship has afforded me.

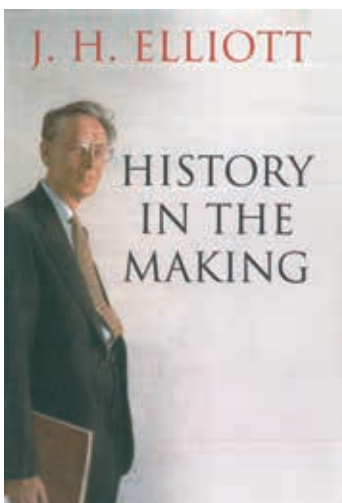
"The experience of the Obama administration buttresses the view that presidential power is not the power to persuade and that the essence of successful presidential leadership is recognizing and exploiting existing opportunities, not in creating them."

Professor George C. Edwards III



The Sir John Elliott Lecture in Atlantic History

In May 2013, Professor Sir John Elliott, FBA, delivered the first in a series of annual lectures in Atlantic history that will bear his name. Shortly afterwards, he shared with Pekka Hämäläinen, Rhodes Professor of American History, reflections on his distinguished career as a historian of Spain, Latin America and the Atlantic world, and on the practice and future directions of Atlantic history. Sir John was instrumental in the creation of the RAI and is a Distinguished Fellow of the Institute. A transcript of the full interview can be read on the RAI's website at www.rai.ox.ac.uk/history/SirJohnElliottLecture.



Pekka Hämäläinen: Sir John, thank you for taking the time to sit down with me. This interview was occasioned and inspired by a very special event: the launching of the annual Sir John Elliott Lecture in Atlantic History, which you inaugurated with your wonderful talk, 'Spanning the Atlantic'. This lecture series will become a major Oxford and RAI institution; it will stimulate and sustain the study of Atlantic history and American history here in Oxford and beyond. I'm therefore delighted to have this

opportunity to discuss some of the ideas you presented in your lecture. May we begin with a brief overview of your career and your development as a historian? What was the initial draw, the attraction of history for you?

Sir John Elliott: I think I always had some sort of historical sense. I would read romantic accounts of the history of the British Isles as a child, but at school I switched from classics to modern languages – French and German. When I went up to Cambridge in 1949, I thought that it would be a good idea to switch to history because of my lingering, longstanding interest in it. I did the Cambridge historical tripos – a three-year course – which introduced me to a lot of questions: European history, British constitutional and economic history, history of political ideas, and so on.

At the end of my first year as an undergraduate, I saw in the university undergraduate newspaper that a group of undergraduates had acquired an old army truck and were going to go around the Iberian Peninsula for the summer vacation. So I hopped on, and we spent six weeks going right round Spain and Portugal. I was very gripped by Spain and felt that there might be interesting prospects for research here if I ever were to become a professional historian, which I wasn't really thinking about at that time. In the end I decided that I would work on the history of Spain and I was particularly interested in the seventeenth century and the Count-Duke of Olivares, a Spanish statesman of the first half of the [seventeenth] century, a major European figure.



Pekka Hämäläinen



I went off to Spain to the archives and spent two years in the Spanish archives working on early seventeenth-century Spain. And I got a fellowship at Trinity College and a University teaching post at Cambridge. Then I moved to the chair of history at Kings College London in 1968, and at that time I'd been asked to give the Wiles Lectures in Belfast. I thought that while a lot of people had worked on the history of the impact of Europe and particularly Spain on America, much less had been done on the impact of America on Europe and on Spain. I devoted those lectures to the Old World and the New – the interaction of Europe and America in the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth century, and particularly the impact of the discovery of America on the European economy, European politics and European consciousness.

I had already got this interest in what you might call the Atlantic world, and indeed one of the chapters in that book, *The Old World and the New*, was called the 'Atlantic World'. On the whole I found, as I was working on Spain, that although a great deal had been done by Spanish historians on Spanish America, they were very compartmentalised from those working on history of Spain. Spanish and Spanish American history were separate university departments. I felt from an early stage, and especially after writing that book, that it was very important to keep the two together and look at them in tandem rather than as isolated units.

I'd already done a grand tour of Spanish America, a sort of research tour, on my first sabbatical from Cambridge in 1963-4, and been right round Spanish America, so I got a sense of the excitement and the possibilities of the history of Latin America, and particularly of colonial Spanish America. Then I went to the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, where I was from 1973 to 1990, and my first priority was to complete the study I was doing of early seventeenth-century Spain and my political biography of the Count-Duke of Olivares, and everything related to the culture and the arts of Spain in the period. And when I finished that book, which came out in 1986, I was thinking about other subjects and I thought that I'd like to go back to this question of the relationship between Europe and America. Particularly as an Englishman living in North America and surrounded by the relics of British colonial society I thought it would be very interesting to compare the British and Spanish experiences of colonisation in the New World.

I decided to undertake an extremely ambitious project, a sustained comparison of British and Spanish America from the beginnings of conquest and colonisation right up to the winning of independence in the late eighteenth century for British America, and between 1810 and 1830 for Spanish America – the year when Bolívar died. Working on that, I got very excited about the possibilities. I had always been interested in comparative history and how much could be done by way of comparison to illuminate the past.

When I came to Oxford in 1990, I began teaching a course on the conquest and colonisation of Peru and Mexico, a very successful and popular course that I inherited. And I kept up this interest and I wanted to relate it to the project that was then being formed when I arrived, for the establishment of what is now the Rothermere American Institute.

PH: Gradually your focus expanded from Spain to the Atlantic and the Americas. This may seem like a natural or even organic development in hindsight: we now know that European and American histories were joined together through the Atlantic framework. But this was not necessarily such a natural step at the time you moved towards Atlantic history. What prompted you to make that leap, to broaden your interests? And how challenging was that leap?



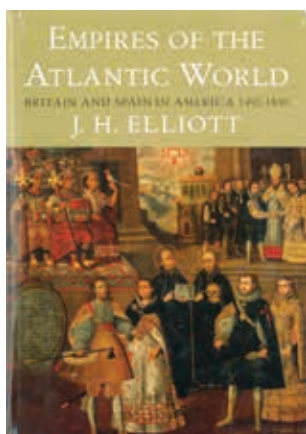
Equestrian Portrait of the Count-Duke of Olivares, by Diego Velázquez (1634)



Photo: Joaquim Alves Gaspar

The Sir John Elliott Lecture in Atlantic History

JE: My first interest was the Iberian Atlantic, and of course you've got this marvellous archive in Seville, the Archive of the Indies. It was a natural progression away from studying state papers about European politics in the 1620s or 30s to looking at the state papers dealing with the defence of America or the supply of silver and so on. So it was perfectly natural in a way. But I was very struck when I began to look into writing on North American history and on British history by how separate they were and how they had been kept separate. Just as Spanish and Spanish American history had been kept separate.



This wasn't true entirely with imperial history. Imperial and administrative history was the one area where the links were being constantly made in the first half of the twentieth century. I felt there were wider possibilities than that, and that perhaps a whole rethinking of imperial structure and the nature of colonisation was also called for. I've always been dead against very narrow administrative and institutional history. I felt that wasn't a way forward, but it's got to be taken into account. What I've

always tried to do therefore is to combine various approaches in the light of where the documents lead me and the sort of things that interested me.

PH: This brings me to *Empires of the Atlantic World*. It's a monumental book – in ambition, scope, and sheer size. Could you tell us a little about the writing process? How did you research, conceptualise, organise and finally write the book?

JE: Goodness me! It is very difficult to reconstruct that. I wanted to keep a narrative going and to move forward through time because I think the difference between history and social science or political science is this sense of movement through time. That was a critical piece of my thinking at the very start of the project – I was going to begin in the fifteenth century and go up to the nineteenth and follow the stories through. Then I decided to divide the book into sections: I deal with conquest and colonisation, the period of the consolidation of those societies, and finally with what I called, and some people criticised me for this, "Emancipation" – emancipation particularly of the creole societies.

I was very much thinking of the settler elites and the creoles in Spanish America. At that time, one of the great breakthroughs in the history of the non-European world and the world conquered and colonised by Europeans was the recovery of the voices of the

vanquished. That I think has been very exciting, but it was in danger of swamping everything else. I felt the creoles and their considerations, and what the settlers were trying to do and the kind of societies they were trying to forge and create, were getting to some extent underrated in the story. That gave a particular direction to the book, and I don't know that I would have written it in quite the same way if I hadn't been somewhat preoccupied by what I thought was in danger of becoming an excessive emphasis on the underprivileged – on the indigenous peoples and slavery. And enormous strides were being made in the recovery of those narratives. But I wanted the settlers to continue to have their voices heard as well.

PH: Atlantic history is one of the great success stories of the late 20th-century historical profession, and you are at the centre of that story. How do you see the future of Atlantic history? How will or should the field evolve? What are some of its major challenges?

JE: The point I was trying to make in my lecture was that in many ways Atlantic history has been treated as the history of movement. I think I defined it in the collection of essays published by David Armitage, *The British Atlantic World*, as a movement of people, commodities, cultural practices and ideas, around the Atlantic basin. I think that's not a bad definition. Looking at what's been published in recent years, it has very much emphasised movement, which is a fascinating subject. We do see a world on the move. There was an enormous amount of physical movement and movement of commodities.

But at the same time, this approach may be underplaying the role of the imperial centre and the role of coercion. Particularly for historians of Spain and Spanish empire, enormous structures and bureaucratic processes weigh heavily on these societies. The king might not get his orders obeyed, but at least there is a presence there, and the royal authority counts for something. Different groups in society are using that royal presence to fortify their own position vis-à-vis other parts of the society. The king is a constant point of reference – and I believe this occurs in the other European American empires. What I wanted to do, and was suggesting as a possible way forward in that lecture, was having another look at how ideas from the metropolis are either imposed or impose themselves on the colonial worlds. I do think there are real possibilities there.

A particular theme I was exploring in that lecture, as I thought of the need to illustrate it in some way, related to a conference held and organised by the Omohundro Institute a year or so ago in the University of Maryland. The theme of that conference was 'Political Arithmetic'. As I was preparing a paper for that lecture, my thought was that this could be terribly interesting, the way in which the economy and economic considerations began to dominate and influence the policy of European states, especially from the mid-



seventeenth century onwards. This was partly under the impact of the Dutch, partly under the impact of theoretical work about mercantilism and mercantilist societies, and so on. Political economy and political arithmetic really moved to the forefront of imperial considerations in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as you get this rivalry of the great European empires in the New World. That was a theme I was trying to follow through in this particular lecture and I think there is a lot more that could actually be done on it. I was just scratching the surface.

PH: What kind of training or personality do Atlantic and comparative histories require? I'm asking because you have often talked about the practical and technical challenges of writing Atlantic and comparative history. Literatures are growing exponentially, and Atlantic and comparative histories demand the mastery of multiple literatures. Do you think we can train comparative historians? And what do you think the modern training of an Atlantic historian might look like?

JE: I think in place of Tony Blair's "education, education, education", I would say "language, language, language". They have got to learn other languages and that's one of the great defects at present of our training. And unfortunately, this has not been recognised in research grants. I did manage to get all my graduate students through in three years, but I absolutely forced them into Spanish archives at the earliest possible stage. It was a great strain for them, but they came out on the right side and managed those demands in three years. But it is now very difficult because there is more literature to be dominated, quite apart from the language. Learning foreign languages is absolutely critical – obviously there's a need to master the literature in so far as one can, and as we've said that is a much harder process than it was when I began. On the other hand, the new generation has the advantage, which my generation did not have, of online publications and digitalisation of archives. You have much more material accessible without travelling to foreign parts. It is an advantage in some ways but a disadvantage in others because you don't get that surrounding sense of a society you can only get from living in a country for some time, getting to know its people, its ways of thinking, its archives.

PH: Finally, we might move from more intellectual to institutional issues. Atlantic history, along with its sister fields such as transnational history, doesn't always fit easily into conventional departmental structures, which are based on national or continental blocs and categories. What kind of institutional or departmental structure does Atlantic history need? In what kind of institutional setting can it thrive?

JE: It depends on if we are talking about undergraduate level or graduate level. At the undergraduate level, I just think it takes a willingness to break down the traditional disciplinary boundaries and the boundaries between departments which got fossilised at a certain moment. And that depends on the individual character of a number of the faculty who are willing to relate to other departments and make contact. And that will feed into teaching.

I think graduate level is more difficult and I think there is a case here for an institute like the Rothermere Institute. I've always been worried about institutes because they very easily turn in on themselves and get enclosed. And then get fossilised. I've seen it happen in the States, I've seen it happen in this country. One needs a constant renovation of thought. When I came here the idea for the current Rothermere Institute was in existence and people were thinking about it. I was very anxious that it shouldn't just be an institute for the study of the United States or the colonial period of the United States, but should be a wider Atlantic one. I thought that the presence of Latin Americanists, or historians of Canada and so on, would prevent that sort of fossilisation and isolation which is one of the great dangers of such institutes.

For that reason, I'm delighted to see that under Nigel Bowles's direction this institute has been moving in that direction. I'm thrilled about the founding of these lectures because it will bring in that wider Atlantic concept into an institute, which is always in danger of focusing excessively or exclusively on the United States. This sort of enlightened foundation for a lectureship or visiting fellowship, can be a way forward for keeping institutes, and this institute among them, alive. That's one way of doing it. Let's hope that twenty years from now we shall all be celebrating the enormous successes of the Rothermere over the decades.





Photo: (Jerry Brown): Mark Miller

Travel Awards 2012–13

Thanks to the generous support of a number of benefactors, the RAI is able to offer travel awards to undergraduate and graduate students to undertake primary research in the United States.

One student whose research was made possible by an RAI Travel Award is Patrick Andelic, a doctoral student at St Anne's College, whose thesis is entitled 'Beyond the New Deal Order: Debating the Democratic Future in an "Age of Conservatism", 1972-84':

I used my travel grant to finance a research trip in September 2012 to archives in Boulder, Colorado, and Berkeley and Los Angeles, California. My dissertation seeks to recapture the fascinating political climate of the United States in the 1970s and early 1980s, and to understand it not simply as a transitional era but as a period in its own right. In particular, my research focuses on the Democratic Party and its inability to construct a popular liberal message.

I began at the University of Colorado, Boulder, consulting the papers of Senator Gary Hart and Representative (later Senator) Tim Wirth. Both Hart and Wirth were 'Watergate Babies', members of the class of Democratic legislators elected in 1974 who brought the perspective of their fiscally conservative, socially liberal, and often suburban constituents into Congress and the Democratic Party. Their papers provided a fascinating insight into the efforts of some Democrats to reorient their party away from the nostrums of the New Deal and Cold War and towards a political agenda that would come to be known as 'neoliberalism'. In Boulder I also had the good fortune to interview Dickey Lee Hullinghorst, a Democratic whip in the Colorado House of Representatives, to discuss her career as both a legislator and activist in Colorado politics, which included working for the presidential campaigns of both Robert and Edward Kennedy and as an organiser for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). This gave me a valuable insight into the experiences of a Western grassroots activist.

From there, I travelled to the University of California, Berkeley, principally to consult the papers of Phillip Burton, an ultra-liberal California Democrat who served as chairman of the Democratic Study Group and House Democratic Caucus. A formidable legislator, much of Burton's activities were undocumented. Nonetheless, I was able to explore his relations with liberal campaigning groups, both nationally and within his San Francisco district. I also had time to look at the papers of Alan Cranston, a senator from California and 1984 presidential candidate, as well as those of David Ross Brower, an environmental activist and co-founder of Friends of the Earth.

Finally, to Los Angeles, where I divided my time between UCLA and the University of Southern California. At UCLA, I explored the papers of Augustus Hawkins, a Democratic congressman from Los Angeles and leading figure in the Congressional Black Caucus whose principal

focus in the 1970s was the passage of a Full Employment Act. Hawkins's papers gave a glimpse into an ultimately unsuccessful effort to weld the rights consciousness of the 1960s to the economic universalism of the New Deal by codifying a legal right to a job for every American that sought one.



I also examined the gubernatorial papers of Jerry Brown – governor of California from 1975 to 1983 (and the current incumbent) and a thwarted candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1976 and 1980. The son of a former governor, Brown belonged to the same neoliberal strain as Hart and Wirth, but with several idiosyncratic policy concerns that saw him derided as 'Governor Moonbeam'.

Brown's papers were a late addition to my plans as I discovered, a few weeks before departing, that the Governor had removed restrictions on his archives.

A principal reason for embarking on this research trip was to explore the viability of a an interest that has been percolating for some time: the activities of Western Democrats in these years, particularly in the nation's 'Sun Belt'. This region is traditionally thought of as the cradle of late 20th century conservative resurgence, and only a few historians have scrutinised liberal responses to the Western conservative mobilisation. The trip convinced me that this is a seam worth pursuing, and I look forward to further developing my ideas on this question.

I am grateful to archivists across Colorado and California for their assistance and forbearance. I should also like to reiterate my gratitude to the Rothermere American Institute, without whose generous financial support this trip would not have been possible.

"My dissertation seeks to recapture the fascinating political climate of the United States in the 1970s and early 1980s, and to understand it not simply as a transitional era but as a period in its own right. In particular, my doctoral research focuses upon the Democratic Party and its inability to construct a popular liberal message."

Patrick Andelic



Having received the largest number of applications to date, the RAI has been able to make awards to twelve exceptional undergraduate, Master's and doctoral students for study in the United States during the next academic year.

Travel grants for 2013-14 have been awarded to:

Patrick Andelic, DPhil in American History: *Beyond the New Deal Order: Debating the Democratic Future in an "Age of Conservatism", 1972-84.*

Award for archival work at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta, Georgia

Tom Cutterham, DPhil in American History: *The Federalist Persuasion, 1782-1786*

Award for research in the Benjamin Rush papers at the National Archives, Washington DC

Joel Duddell, Undergraduate in History: *The Role of Organised Crime in the Emergence of New Gender and Racial Identities amongst Immigrant Communities in Early Twentieth Century New York*

Award for archival work at Brooklyn Public Library, Brooklyn Historical Society and the Schomburg Centre for Research in Black Culture, New York

Bassam Gergi, MPhil in Comparative Government: *The Impact of Mayoral Leadership on Inequality in the American Metropolis*

Award for interviews with municipal leaders in Newark, New Jersey

Richard Johnson, MPhil in Comparative Government: *The Last Bastion of White Supremacy: US Senate Malapportionment and the Descriptive Representation of African-Americans, 1966-2012*

Award for archival work in Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland and Tennessee

Linda Magana, DPhil in the History of Science and Medicine: *Health on Distant Shores: The Impact of American Imperial Politics on Puerto Rican Public Health and Medicine, 1898-1952*

Award for archival work at the Universidad de Puerto Rico (Colección Puertorriquenia) and the Archivo General de Puerto Rico

Robin Markwica, DPhil in International Relations: *Explaining Failures in Coercive Diplomacy: The Emotional Construction of Power Politics*

Award for archival research at the George H. W. Bush Presidential

Library in College Station, Texas, and the Conflict Records Research Centre in Washington DC

Patrick Sandman, DPhil in American History: *Bringing Congress Back In: The Politics of Watergate and Institutional Change*

Award for archival work at the Rodino Library in Newark, New Jersey, and the Ford Presidential Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan

Max Thompson, DPhil in Politics and International Relations: *Amity in American Foreign Policy*

Award for archival work at the FDR Presidential Library, New York; Holocaust Museum and the National Archives, Washington DC; and the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library in Staunton, Virginia

Adam Ward, Undergraduate in PPE: *What challenges do LGBT Republicans and their allies face when promoting LGBT rights within the United States Republican Party? How have they attempted to overcome difficulties and with what success?*

Award for interviews in New York, Washington DC, Los Angeles and San Diego

Holly Webb, Undergraduate in History and Politics: *The Deerfield Captives of 1704*

Award for archival work at the Memorial Libraries, Deerfield, and Amherst College, Mass.

Victor Yang, DPhil in Politics and International Relations: *The Forgotten Rainbow of U.S. AIDS Activism: People of Colour and the Endurance of Social Movements*

Award for interviews and archival research on the racial politics of the AIDS activist movement in Philadelphia and New York





Photo: John Cairns

Seminars, speakers and fellows

The RAI is a hub for undergraduate teaching and doctoral seminars in American history, politics and literature, alongside its programme of special lectures and conferences.

Undergraduate courses in American history and politics held at the RAI included 'The Government and Politics of the United States', 'The American Empire, 1823 – 1904' and 'Slavery and the Crisis of the Union, 1854–65'. Graduate seminars features work-in-progress presentations from doctoral students on topics ranging from 'The Cult of Alfred the Great in Revolutionary America' to 'Where the New Left Meets the Religious Right: Home-schooling and Modern US Politics'. The Institute also hosted for the first time a series of interdisciplinary seminars which brought together scholars of literature, history and politics to discuss such themes as ideology, national identity, and transnational forces in American foreign policy; the iconography of modern leadership; and the legacy of the founding fathers in contemporary America.

Among its many outstanding speakers in 2011–12, the RAI welcomed:

- **Professors Barry Supple** (Cambridge) and **Avner Offer** (Oxford), who discussed "'A Great Deal of Ruin in a Nation': The Post-War Economic Development of the United States'
- **Professor Linda Kerber** (Iowa), who spoke on 'Statelessness in America, Past and Present'
- **Dr. Donald Drakeman** (Princeton and Cambridge), who questioned 'Why Do We Think the American Framers Wanted to Separate Church and State?'
- The distinguished writer and journalist **Michael S. Malone**, on 'The Triumph of the Humanities'
- **Professor Jennifer Hochschild** (Harvard), who asked 'Can the United States Transcend Its Racial History? How Immigration, Multiracialism, Genomics, and the Young Might Create a New American Racial Order'

Guest speakers at the American History Research Seminar included Professors Peter Onuf (Virginia) and Annette Gordon-Reed (Harvard), Professor Robert Self (Brown), Professor Ellen DuBois (UCLA), Professor Nancy Cott (Harvard), Dr Sarah Pearsall (Cambridge) and Professor Louis Warren (UC Davis). The American Literature Research Seminar welcomed speakers including Professor Sarah Rivett (Princeton), Professor Stacey Margolis (Utah), Professor Bryan Wagner (Berkeley) and Dr James Peacock (Keele).

2012-13 and 2013-14 fellows

The RAI community was once again invigorated by the Institute's visiting fellows in 2012-13. Celeste-Marie Bernier reflects upon her time at the RAI on page eight of this report; she was joined by Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Associate Professor of History at Siena College, New York, an expert on American foreign relations and migration; Maria Fanis, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Ohio, who brought to the Institute her expertise on national identity construction, the role of gender, race, and religion in foreign policy, the moral underpinnings of security threats, new security threats under globalization, and the role of humanitarian wars in international security. Erin Penner, who specialises in British and American modernism, particularly the Bloomsbury Group and literature of the American South, joined the RAI as a visiting fellow from Cornell University and left to take up a position in the English department of Ashbery University, Kentucky.

The RAI welcomes as visiting professors and fellows in 2013-14:

- Professor Richard J. M. Blackett** (Vanderbilt) as Harmsworth Visiting Professor of American History
- Professor Randall Woods** (Arkansas) as John G. Winant Visiting Professor of American Government (Michaelmas Term)
- Professor Edward G. Carmines** (Indiana) as John G. Winant Visiting Professor of American Government (Trinity Term)
- Dr Nicolas Guyatt** (York) as Senior Visiting Research Fellow
- The Hon. Jamie Rubin** as Visiting Fellow and Scholar-in-Residence
- Professor Bruce R. Kuniholm** (Duke) as Harmsworth Faculty Visitor (Hilary Term)
- Dr Christopher Moran** (Warwick), **Dr Tom Packer** (London), **Professor Sarah Rivett** (Princeton), **Professor Ann Schofield** (Kansas) and **Dr Kate Williams** (Illinois Urbana-Champaign) as visiting fellows.



Photo: John Cairns

Book launches at the RAI

2012–13 was another year of notable book launches at the RAI, featuring publications from visiting fellows and drawing leading scholars to the Institute from across the world. Subjects ranged from representations of iconic African-Americans, to American missionaries, to the history of smuggling in the United States, and to Caribbean economic history.

In November 2012, RAI Senior Visiting Fellow and Professor of African-American Studies at Nottingham University, Celeste-Marie Bernier, launched her latest book, **Characters of Blood: Black Heroism in the Transatlantic Imagination** (Virginia UP) at the Institute. The book won the 2013 British Association for American Studies Book Prize, given annually to the best book in American Studies, and explores visual and textual representations of six iconic men and women – Toussaint Louverture, Nathaniel Turner, Sengbe Pieh, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Tubman.



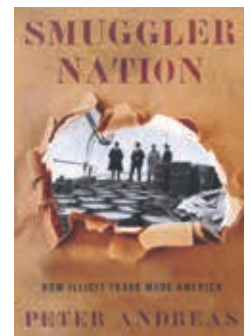
Domestic Frontiers: Gender, Reform, and American Interventions in the Ottoman Balkans and the Near East (Massachusetts UP) by Barbara Reeves-Ellington, RAI Visiting Fellow and Associate Professor of History at Siena College, New York, and launched at the Institute in February, studies the unintended consequences of an American missionary campaign. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, American

Protestant missionaries attempted to export their religious beliefs and cultural ideals to the Ottoman Empire. Seeking to attract Orthodox Christians and even Muslims to their faith, they promoted the paradigm of the 'Christian home' as the foundation of national progress. Yet the missionaries' efforts not only failed to win many converts but also produced some unexpected results.

Drawing on a range of Ottoman, Bulgarian, Russian, French, and English sources, *Domestic Frontiers* tracks the history of this little-known episode of American cultural expansion. Issues of gender and race influenced the missionaries' efforts as well as the complex responses of Ottoman subjects to American intrusions into their everyday lives. By the start of the 20th century, as some missionaries began to promote international understanding rather than Protestantism, they also paved the way for the expansion of American political and commercial interests.

In May, the RAI hosted the launch of **Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America** (OUP) by Peter Andreas, Professor of Political Science at Brown University. *Smuggler Nation* tells America's long history of illicit imports, ranging from West Indies molasses and Dutch gunpowder in the 18th century, to British industrial technologies and African slaves in the 19th century, to French condoms and Canadian alcohol in the early 20th century, to Mexican workers and Colombian cocaine in the modern era. This provocative account demonstrates how contraband capitalism has been an integral part of American capitalism.

Providing a sweeping narrative history from colonial times to the present, *Smuggler Nation* is the first book to retell the story of America – and of its engagement with its neighbours and the rest of the world – as a series of battles over clandestine commerce. Andreas reveals how smuggling played a pivotal role in America's birth, westward expansion, and economic development, while anti-smuggling campaigns have dramatically enhanced the federal government's policing powers. The great irony, he argues, is that a country that was born and grew up through smuggling is today the world's leading anti-smuggling crusader.



In **The Economic History of the Caribbean since the Napoleonic Wars** (Cambridge UP), Victor Bulmer Thomas, Honorary Professor at the UCL Institute of the Americas and Professor Emeritus of London University, examines the economic history of the Caribbean in the two hundred years since the Napoleonic Wars – the first analysis to span the whole region. The study makes use of a specially constructed database to observe trends across the whole region and chart the progress of nearly thirty individual countries. Its findings challenge many long-standing assumptions about the region, and its in-depth case studies shed new light on the history of three countries in particular: Belize, Cuba and Haiti.

If you are an author or publisher and would like to find out more about holding a book launch at the RAI, please email enquiries@rai.ox.ac.uk.



The Vere Harmsworth Library in 2012–13

Jane Rawson, Vere Harmsworth Librarian, describes another busy year at the VHL, home to the finest academic collections in American history, politics and government outside North America.

The Vere Harmsworth Library continues to be well-used and warmly appreciated by students and researchers at the RAI, from Oxford and beyond. A significant donation this year came from the distinguished journalist and writer Godfrey Hodgson, a Distinguished Fellow of the RAI, with his personal collection of books and papers finding a new home in the VHL. The books are gradually being added to our collection, and the papers evaluated so that they too may be made available to scholars. The papers include research notes for his many books and transcripts of interviews with officials from the Reagan administration, conducted for the Reagan on Reagan television programme produced for Channel 4 in 1988. We are also grateful as always to the American Association of Rhodes Scholars for their donation of 101 books as part of the Adeloytte-Kieffer-Smith collection.

The 2012 elections in November drew a great deal of attention to the library's archive of US elections ephemera, donated by Professor Philip Davies of the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library. Following several years work by archivists in the Bodleian's Special Collections Department, a catalogue to the archive was completed and launched with an exhibition in the library in the run-up to the elections. It is now possible for researchers to see what the archive contains by material type, year, level (presidential, congressional, state and local) and to search by name of candidate. The catalogue may be viewed online at <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/online/blcas/uselection.html>, and researchers wishing to consult materials from the archive should contact the Librarian. More information about the archive may be found on our website, including a video of Professor Davies discussing selected items in more depth.

We also joined forces with the Conservative Party Archive at the Bodleian to contribute blog posts and images of some of the materials in the Elections Archive to the Bodleian's coverage of Parliament Week in November, a UK initiative designed to engage people with parliamentary democracy. The posts on Exploring UK and US Elections may be found on the Bodleian's website at <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whats-on/online/parliament-week/parliament-week-2012>, illustrated with examples from both archives.

The library's website has received a makeover this summer, which we hope will make it more user-friendly and provide more comprehensive and up-to-date information about using the library. Please do take a look at it at <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/vhl> – we welcome any comments or suggestions for further improvement. You can also find the library and keep up with our news on Facebook (www.facebook.com/VereHarmsworthLibrary) and Twitter (twitter.com/vhllib).



A century of campaign buttons, 1908-2008, from the Philip & Rosamund Davies US Elections Campaigns Archive.

"It was in discovering the RAI that I really found my home here [in Oxford], the intellectual and social environment that best combines Oxford's resources and those from other universities in Europe and North America, and that supports disciplinary excellence while encouraging interdisciplinary exploration and collaboration. My deepest thanks for this tremendous opportunity."

Erin Penner, RAI Visiting Fellow, 2012-13

The Rothermere American Institute's Budget – A Summary

The RAI's financial position is stable and secure in the medium-term. But if the Institute is to thrive in perpetuity, it must succeed in its Campaign to raise endowment capital for the Directorship and University Professorship, for its academic programme, and for its programme of studentships and postdoctoral fellowships. I am confident that, with the continuing generosity of its many supporters, it will do so.

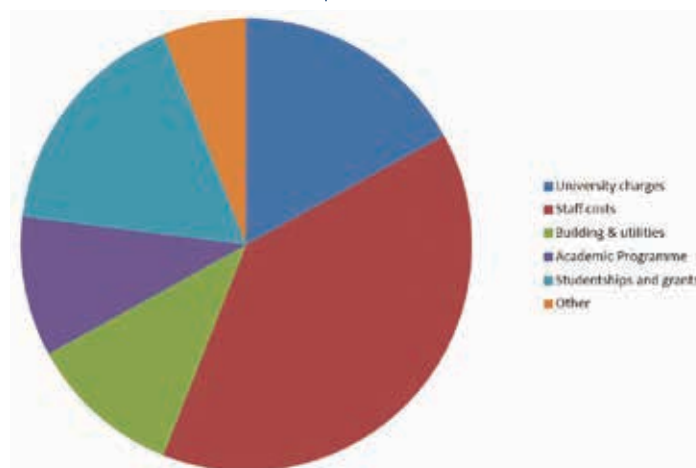
The charts on this page show the distribution of the RAI's income and expenditure during the 2012–13 financial year. The Institute is funded largely from two main trust funds: the first supports general running costs, and the second the academic programme. The annual income streams expected from these two funds for 2013–14 are £98,500 and £70,000 respectively.

The RAI receives a share of the University's research and teaching income calculated according to the research and income activity that takes place here. In 2012–13 the sum amounted to £22,000. The Institute also receives £38,000 per year from the Bodleian Libraries, representing a contribution to the building's running costs and based on the proportion of space occupied by the Vere Harmsworth Library. The revenue shown in the income chart is income from fees paid by conference attendees and from hiring out seminar rooms.

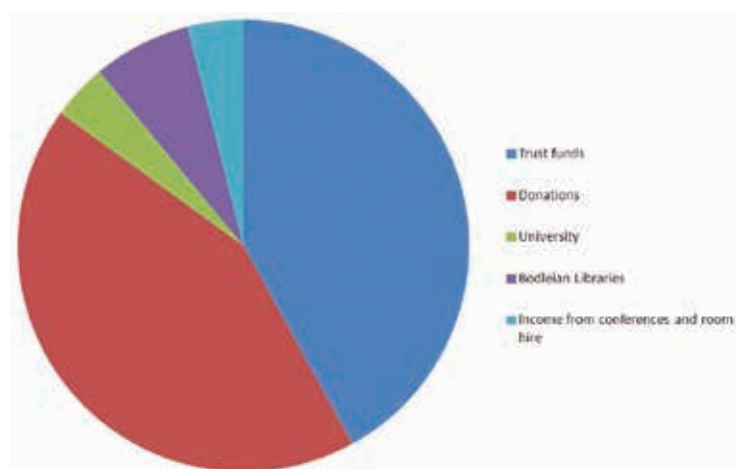
The University charges the RAI a total of £95,600 annually as a contribution to its own costs, comprising a £79,300 infrastructure charge and a capital charge of £16,300.

Most of the RAI's staff costs, which include both academic staff based at the Institute and the RAI's support staff, are met by donors; the remainder is met by income from existing trust funds and from the charging of overheads to conferences. The Director's salary from 2011 to 2016 is met entirely from a most generous anonymous donor who has made a cash gift of £525,000 to cover a five-year period; the salary of the Development Officer is also largely funded by donors.

Expenditure



Income



Nigel Bowles



Photo: John Cairns

Former Congressmen Carr and Stearns visit the RAI for 'Congress to Campus'

“What does the representative see when he or she goes home to look at the represented?” This question, first posed by political scientist Richard Fenno in 1978, formed the basis of ‘What Political Scientists Need to Understand about Congress’, the afternoon session of 2013’s ‘Congress to Campus’ event at the RAI.

Each year ‘Congress to Campus’ brings two former Members of Congress, one Democrat and one Republican, to the RAI to speak to sixth form students from local schools, before an afternoon talk open to undergraduates and graduates. Chaired by Nigel Bowles and Professor Philip Davies, Director of the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library, the two speakers who grappled with Fenno’s puzzle were former U.S. Representatives Bob Carr (D-Michigan) and Cliff Stearns (R-Florida), who between them boast forty-two years of legislative experience.

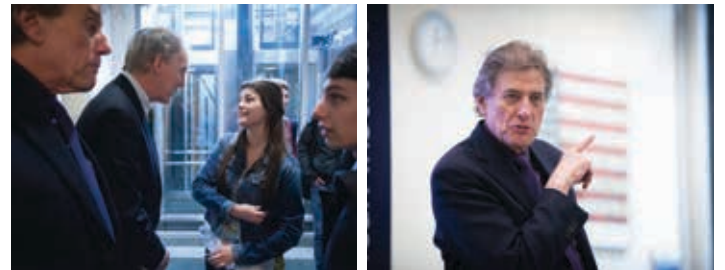
The nature of the district, explained Stearns, is crucial. Both ideology and geography matter. His district, the Florida 6th, though solidly Republican, encompassed a conservative naval base in Jacksonville and the more liberal University of Florida campus in Gainesville. Though a principal responsibility of the representative was the education of his or her electorate, he continued, these efforts could often be frustrated by the ignorance of Congress shared by some voters. Stearns recalled a meeting with one disgruntled constituent with a fairly minor complaint and – having asked whether she had contacted her selectman, county commissioner, or mayor – being told, “I didn’t want to start that high”.

Carr offered his own corollaries to Fenno. In determining what a representative sees in their district, he contended, much depends on what they see in themselves, how they conceptualise their responsibilities and goals: “Who’s doing the seeing? What’s on [his/her] side of the eyeballs?” For much of his career, Carr represented marginal, Republican-leaning districts in Michigan. Winning over those moderate-to-conservative constituents, he said, represented less of a challenge because he had begun his political life as a Republican and therefore understood them viscerally as well as intellectually. Consequently, his time as a representative had one striking parallel with his previous career as a lawyer: at times he found himself advocating for clients with whom he did not necessarily agree.

Perhaps surprisingly, given the polarisation seen in the current Congress, the event produced a significant degree of bipartisan consensus. This was nowhere more obvious than in the question and answer session, when each speaker more often supplemented rather than rebutted the other’s remarks. Stearns and Carr agreed that poorly designed campaign finance laws were corrupting and that the need to fundraise impeded the work of a legislator. There was likewise disquiet over the increasingly parliamentary nature of congressional parties, despite the distinctly un-parliamentary nature

of the Constitution. “The Congress of the United States”, according to Carr, “unlike your parliament . . . is designed to stop things happening.” Judging by the poll numbers, many Americans seem to have reached the same conclusion.

If you have links with schools in the Oxford area and would like to find out more about participating in next year’s Congress to Campus, please email enquiries@rai.ox.ac.uk



Photos: John Cairns

Staying in touch with the RAI all year long

The RAI website – www.rai.ox.ac.uk – contains all the latest news of events and activities at the Institute. The site features dedicated pages for podcasts, past and upcoming conferences, and mini-sites for American history, politics and literature. The RAI can also be found on Facebook (www.facebook.com/RAIOxford), Twitter (twitter.com/RAIOxford) and YouTube (www.youtube.com/user/RAIOxford).

If you are not already on the RAI’s mailing list, and would like to receive updates of forthcoming events and activities, please contact enquiries@rai.ox.ac.uk.



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