

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 2014-15

RAI

ROTHERMERE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
AMERICA'S HOME AT OXFORD





Director's Foreword: People, Programme, Purpose

The RAI has, as a colleague who shaped its founding wrote recently, “become a place that really matters”. The RAI's visiting professors, fellows, and lecturers in 2014-2015 have helped make it so.

Among our visiting and new fellows in the past year have been:

- Dr. Marie Favereau, European Research Council (ERC) Postdoctoral Fellow;
- Professor Annette Gordon-Reed, Carol K. Pforzheimer Professor at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Charles Warren Professor of American Legal History at Harvard Law School, and Professor of History at Harvard University, as Harmsworth Visiting Professor of American History;
- Professor Paul Kerry, Brigham Young University, as a Visiting Research Fellow;
- Professor Bruce Kuniholm, Duke University, as Duke-Harmsworth Visiting Fellow;
- Professor Marc Lafrance, Concordia University, as a Visiting Research Fellow;
- Dr. Bryan Miller, ERC Postdoctoral Fellow;
- Dr. Steffen Rimner, Yale University, as Postdoctoral Visiting Research Fellow;
- Professor Carol Sanger, Barbara Aronstein Black Professor of Law, Columbia Law School, as Senior Visiting Research Fellow;
- Professor Byron Shafer, Hawkins Chair of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin, as John G. Winant Visiting Professor of American Government;
- Dr. Irina Shingiray, ERC Postdoctoral Fellow.

In Michaelmas Term 2014, Annette Gordon-Reed gave a memorable Harmsworth Inaugural Lecture on *Constituting the People: Law's Empire and the American Imagination*. It has been our privilege that Annette, whose work has redefined the field of Jefferson scholarship, has worked alongside us this year.

Byron Shafer, the first holder of the Andrew W. Mellon Chair of American Government at Oxford, and who in that role helped plan the RAI in the 1990s, held the John G. Winant Chair of American Government. Byron contributed generously to undergraduate teaching in American government and politics, hosted a research seminar featuring visiting speakers from



Annette Gordon-Reed
(John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur
Foundation)

the United States, and helped graduate students with their research. We enjoyed Byron's excellent Winant Lecture in which he explored the puzzling dynamics of partisan alignment; an exploration that he is now committing to a book.

The RAI awarded scholarships to:

- Oenone Kubie, as the first holder of an RAI Graduate Scholarship in American History, created by a generous anonymous donor;
- April Pierce and Courtney Traub, as holders of Esmond Harmsworth Scholarships in American Literature;
- Mara Tchalakov and James Aber, as holders of RAI Graduate Scholarships in American Politics.

Programme

Michaelmas Term 2014 brought special lectures from Philip K. Howard (Common Good legal reform coalition) on 'A Progressive Disease: Is Micro-Regulation Killing America's "Can Do" Culture?'; Gary Lauer (eHealth Inc.) in the American Business: Past, Present and Future series entitled 'America's Healthcare Crisis: Lessons for Policymakers'; and a brilliant double act by Peter Goldmark (Environmental Defense Foundation) and Steven Isenberg (visiting scholar at Oxford's Faculty of English), 'Has America Lost its Way?'

Hilary 2015 was the busiest term in the RAI's busiest year. Among the one hundred seminars, lectures, and conferences was a fine symposium organized by Peter Thompson, 'The Age of Emancipation', with speakers including Annette Gordon-Reed, Nick Guyatt (Cambridge), and Peter Onuf (Virginia). Other notable events included the seminar series 'The Atlantic World in the Long Eighteenth Century', convened by Tom Cutterham and Aaron Graham, and 'Constitutional Thought and History', convened by Nicholas Cole and Paul Kerry; a special lecture by Christopher P. 'Kip' Hall (DLA Piper and Connecticut) on 'Combatting Fraud in the US Capital Markets'; and a workshop organized by RAI Postdoctoral Fellow Ursula Hackett featuring a keynote lecture by David Campbell (Notre Dame), 'One Nation Under God(s)? The Politics of Religious Diversity in the United States'.

'Congress to Campus' in March brought two former





Members of Congress – Dennis Hertel (D-MI, 1981-93) and Claudine Schneider (R-RI, 1981-91) – to a packed RAI to share their experiences as candidates and office holders with students from local schools, and undergraduate and graduate students. We are grateful to them for their engagement, to Byron Shafer for leading the discussions, and to Professor Philip Davies of the Eccles Centre at the British Library for once again making possible this wonderful occasion that our partners in local schools value so much.

Easter brought a major conference that sprang from the RAI's intellectual heart: the meeting points between America and the world. Convened by Jay Sexton, Ben Mountford and Steve Tuffnell, and Jamie Belich of the Oxford Centre for Global History, it examined the transformative power of nineteenth and early twentieth-century gold rushes. What caused, sustained, and shaped gold rushes, and the forms that they took – and, as our distinguished plenary speaker Frances Cairncross pointed out, still take in the form of shale rushes? What were their effects upon labour markets, governments, ecologies, companies, prices, trade, imperialism, security, and peoples? A detailed account of the conference appears on pages 10 and 11.

In Trinity Term, we welcomed Andrew O'Shaughnessy, Director of the Robert H. Smith Center for Jefferson Studies, Monticello, and Professor of American History at the University of Virginia to give the Sir John Elliott Lecture in Atlantic History on 'The British Empire and the Outbreak of the American Revolution'; Lord Patten of Barnes, Chancellor of Oxford University, to give the first Ambassador John J. Louis Jr. Lecture in Anglo-American Relations; and Jennifer Egan to give the Esmond Harmsworth Lecture in American Arts and Letters on 'Experimental Fiction: Confessions of a Reluctant Practitioner'. Godfrey Hodgson, for so long a pillar of British scholarship on American politics, spoke movingly at a book launch for his new book *JFK and LBJ* published by Yale University Press.

July 2015 brought the third Interdisciplinary Summer School to the RAI. We extend our warmest thanks to Dr. Sally Bayley and her colleagues. We are also in Sally's debt for having again brought the



brilliant playwright Elisabeth Gray to the Princess Margaret Memorial Garden at the RAI, where she performed her one-woman play *Testament: An Evening of Flannery O'Connor's South*. Elisabeth was again accompanied by Jack Harris, who introduced a southern musical flavour to a warm English summer's evening.

Purpose

An account of the RAI's sound financial condition appears on the penultimate page of this report. As readers of previous reports and editions of *RAI Matters* know, the Institute is entirely dependent upon private income to sustain its activities. The first phase of the Campaign for the RAI, which concluded in June 2015, resulted in major steps forward. In 2014 alone, the RAI received £1.135 million in donations and written pledges – more than twice the Institute's annual budget. The sum includes £150,000 in support of an endowed graduate scholarship in American History; two donations each of \$100,000 that have been added to the RAI's general endowment; \$50,000 in support of an endowed postdoctoral fellowship in American history, and \$50,000 in support of general costs. I am indebted to our remarkable donors who invest so generously in the RAI's future, and take the opportunity here to thank them for making possible what is done here. I am particularly grateful to Huw David, the RAI's Director of Development, for his dedicated professionalism.

I indicated in last year's Annual Report that the RAI's campaign would not end with its first phase. Decisions about the second and further phases will, however, be for others to make. After seven years as Director of the RAI, I have decided to step down from the post and to leave the university. By the time this Annual Report reaches you, Professor Jay Sexton will be Acting Director of the RAI, and Professor Michèle Mendelssohn will be Acting Deputy Director. With Jay and Michèle at the helm, the Institute will go from strength to strength, buoyed by the fullest support from its Executive Committee, Advisory Board, academic staff and students, administrators, donors and friends.

For those of us for whom America and the Atlantic area encompass our professional lives, the RAI is the best place to be and work: *America's Home at Oxford* is indeed a place that "really matters". It matters for so many, but for our current and future students most of all. It is primarily for those students that we are here, and it is for them that we do what we do.

It has been my privilege to have been given the chance to serve those students, my colleagues, the RAI's supporters, and our many visitors. Thank you all.



Nigel Bowles (John Cairns)

From juvenile delinquency to T.S. Eliot: graduate scholarships at the RAI

The RAI has once again been able to offer financial support to graduate students working in American history, politics and international relations, and literature, thanks to the generosity of its benefactors. Here, four scholarship recipients reflect on the impact of this support on their doctoral research.

Mara Tchalakov

The generosity of the RAI's benefactors was essential in supporting the continuation of my doctoral research into the psychology of American foreign policy decision-making. My dissertation focuses on the political psychology (and, more specifically, the information processing styles) of national security decision-makers during foreign policy crises. The sponsorship allowed me to remain in Oxford and to benefit from the rich resources at the Vere Harmsworth Library and within the RAI's graduate community as I worked toward completing my dissertation. I was also able to conduct primary archival research in the U.S. on two occasions, including visits to the Library of Congress, the Johnson Presidential Library, the Kennedy Presidential Library and the National Security Archive (NSA) sponsored by George Washington University.

One of my primary case studies concerns the psychological fissures within the senior policymakers surrounding President Johnson during the initial Americanisation of the Vietnam War. During my visit to Austin I was able to consult with all of the national security archivists at the LBJ Library. Many of the relevant files for my project were found in the library's individual subject files and collections of personal papers. Most of these documents have not yet been digitised and would not otherwise have been accessible to me. These included the Dean Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, Walt W. Rostow, and William Fulbright files, the Office of the President Files and National Security 'Memos to the President' File.

While at the Library of Congress, I was able to access the personal papers of General Curtis LeMay and former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara in the U.S. Manuscript Division, among others. In Boston, the warmth and guidance of the staff of the JFK Library directed me to files concerning President Kennedy's deliberations on Vietnam and the Cuban Missile Crisis. These trips also allowed me to conduct valuable personal interviews, such as with Jerrold Post, the CIA's former head of foreign leadership profiling, and with international relations scholars such as Stephen Walt.

Finally, the sponsorship afforded many opportunities to present my research to government agencies in the U.S. and U.K. Once again, my sincerest thanks go to the RAI's donors for their support. The quality and breadth of our research as graduate students would not be possible without their interest and generosity.

April Pierce

My doctoral thesis explores connections between T.S. Eliot's work and what American philosopher Richard Rorty calls 'The Linguistic Turn' – a period of philosophy during the early 20th century that redefined European and American thought and culture. Focusing on Eliot's philosophically transnational heritage, my thesis emphasises the influence of Eliot's American, British, and German education on his work.

Eliot's early philosophical writings are deeply rooted in the language debates during this period of philosophical and literary history. My research examined Eliot's early philosophy of language, including unpublished material held at The Houghton Library, Harvard, and King's College Library, Cambridge.

The RAI's Esmond Harmsworth Graduate Scholarship in Literature gave me the opportunity to redraft, polish, and expand my thesis. Without this, the focus and scholastic import of the dissertation would have been much foggier. The scholarship gave me the time to correspond with Eliot scholars in the United States, who are currently assembling his *Complete Prose* for the first time. This gave me access to exciting, unpublished material, much of which has never been addressed by Eliot scholarship.

The RAI has been an excellent resource for extracurricular inspiration. As an American myself, it is helpful to be connected to a community of writers and thinkers with their roots on the other side of the Atlantic – scholars who have a sense of the direction of academic work there.

Courtney Traub

The generous funding of the RAI's Esmond Harmsworth Graduate Scholarships in Literature allowed me to successfully complete my D.Phil. thesis, entitled 'Romanticising Crisis: Digital Revolution and Ecological Risk in Late Postmodern American Fiction', in January 2015, and to successfully pass my viva with minor corrections. Without this precious economic aid, I would likely have found it difficult to submit my thesis in under four years, as I was self-financed throughout my time at Oxford. The studentship represented a significant resource, allowing me to focus entirely on my research.

My research elucidated ties between Romantic and contemporary literary responses to crisis, particularly relating to environmental and technological upheavals in an age of climate change and digital speeding. The thesis, conceived under the supervision of Dr. Lloyd Pratt, unearths transatlantic Romantic legacies in contemporary American fiction from authors including Kathryn Davis, Jennifer Egan, and Ben Marcus. It additionally discusses the work of Paul Auster, Don DeLillo, Thomas Pynchon, and other twentieth century writers closely associated with postmodern voice and form.

My forthcoming monograph project will build from the thesis by offering a more granular and historicised account of why Romantic ideology persists in contemporary fictional accounts of crisis.

The RAI has provided a remarkable research environment and intellectual community during my time at Oxford. I hope to continue my association with the Institute in the future.

Oenone Kubie

My dissertation has developed from a study of juvenile delinquents in early-twentieth century Chicago to looking at boys' street culture more generally. In particular, I look at working-class and immigrant boys in Chicago in relationship to middle-class and working-class adult culture.

Starting with secondary literature, I explored the work of Frederick Thrasher, a sociologist whose major study was of gangs in Chicago in the 1920s. What surprised me was how early many boys became involved in serious and violent crime. Thrasher documented boys as young as twelve stealing money and automobiles, as well as shooting or being shot at by the police, railway security and each other. Thrasher's account will enable me to challenge the historiography and the media about boys' roles in urban space, the Chicago race riot of 1919 and juvenile crime. Using primary sources during my forthcoming research trip to Chicago will allow me to compare Thrasher's account with other sources such as juvenile court records and coroners' reports.

In Chicago, I'll also give a paper at the Society of the Study of Children in the Past conference. This emerges from a presentation I gave at the RAI's American History Graduate Seminar. Entitled 'Idealised Misbehaviour and Juvenile Delinquency', it questions what ideal boyhood looked like in early 20th century America and asks how tensions between idealising some misbehaviour while criminalising others played out in Progressive Era culture.

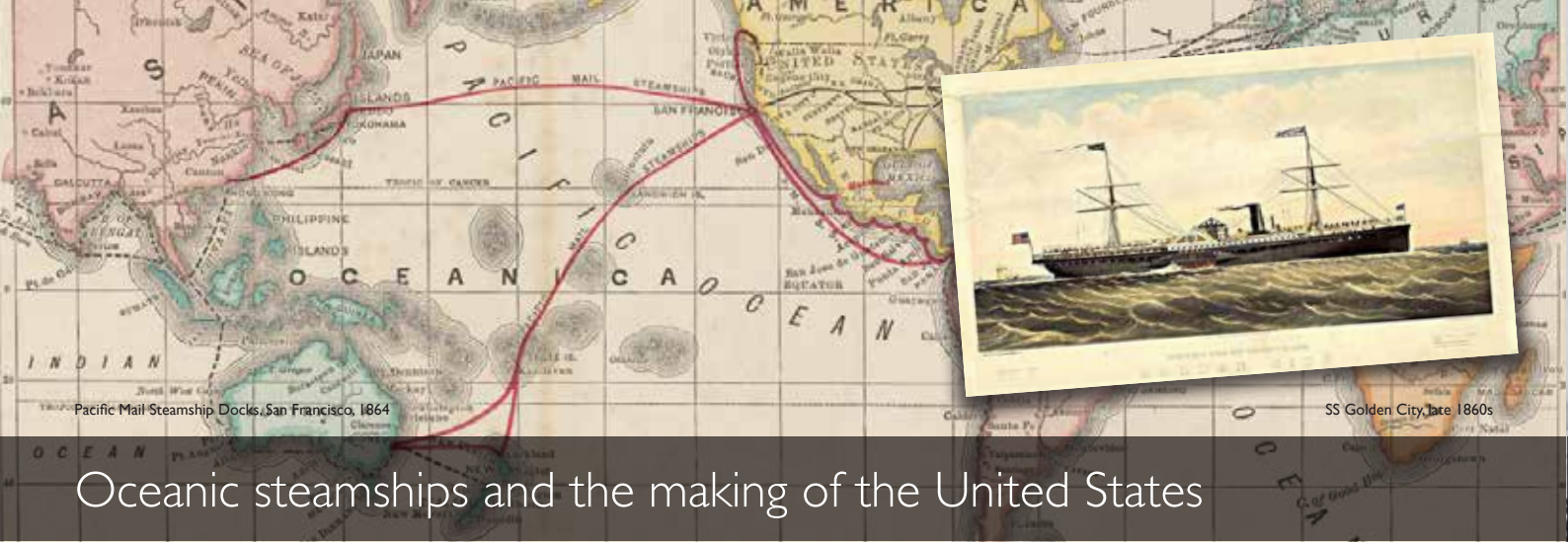
The support of my supervisors, Pekka Hämäläinen and Mara Keire, and the RAI community has been fantastic. The Institute is an exceptional place, enabling graduate students to exchange ideas with a diverse range of visiting scholars. I was particularly lucky to have the help of Professor Carol Sanger, a legal historian and RAI Senior Visiting Research Fellow. We have been through several cases in the records of the Chicago Commission on Race Relations [available in the Vere Harmsworth Library] together. These sources demonstrate how working class and immigrant boys played pivotal roles in shaping racial experiences in the city and how juvenile justice laws were challenged in court by these children and their families.



Oenone Kubie (John Cairns)

"The support of my supervisors, Pekka Hämäläinen and Mara Keire, and the RAI community has been fantastic. The Institute is an exceptional place, enabling graduate students to exchange ideas with a diverse range of visiting scholars."

Oenone Kubie



Pacific Mail Steamship Docks, San Francisco, 1864

SS Golden City, late 1860s

Oceanic steamships and the making of the United States

Jay Sexton, the RAI's Acting Director in 2015-16, is Associate Professor of American History at Oxford University, Tutorial Fellow of Corpus Christi College, and author of the acclaimed *Debtor Diplomacy: Finance and American Foreign Relations in the Civil War Era, 1837-1873* and *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America*. His next book will examine the role of oceanic steamships in forging the modern United States.

Being an historian of the United States in Oxford means that there is no escaping countless hours crammed into an airplane seat en route to conferences and research trips across the Atlantic. The glamour of long-haul travel quickly wears off. The only thing worse than a long-haul flight is a long-haul flight followed by a race through customs, a re-entry through security, and then a dash to catch a connection. Several years ago it dawned on me that the route map of United Airlines (my transport company of choice) was exercising a hidden influence on decisions I made concerning the conferences I attended and the archives I visited. The more direct the flight path to an American city, the more inclined I was to go there. What would Leopold von Ranke have said!

This realization helped to catalyse an interest in the history of transport, the focus of my current research. In what ways, I began to wonder, did the transport systems developed in the nineteenth century condition the developments of American history that I had long studied – the expansion of the United States, its national consolidation, and its integration with the wider world? The task I set myself was to examine the formation, operation, and implications of the transnational transport systems – particularly oceanic steamships – that Americans developed in the nineteenth century.

This is, of course, a story in which Britain looms large. Americans were obsessed by the British steam networks that defined the global transport of the era. Businessmen and politicians made the case for the creation of a U.S.-controlled transport network on the grounds that it was the pre-requisite to freeing themselves from the tentacles of the British Empire. Americans closely followed the widely reported competition for supremacy of the transatlantic steam route in the 1850s between the British Cunard Line and the American Collins Line – a winner-take-all rivalry ultimately won by the British.

But as with so much else in the U.S. view of Britain in this period, on-going rivalry coexisted with admiration of British practices and institutions. The federal legislation that extended subsidies to upstart U.S. shipping companies in the 1840s drew inspiration from the assistance the British state extended to its steam-shippers. The business practices of the titans of British shipping, such as Cunard

and P&O, were mimicked by U.S. companies. The translation of British imperial relationships between private companies, the state, and foreign allies did not unfold smoothly in the United States, but there can be little doubt of the influence of British transport systems upon those in America.



Jay Sexton

The most successful U.S. steam companies were those that developed their own routes, rather than competing with more generously subsidized British and European rivals. The most important U.S. service of the nineteenth century was the 'Panama route,' principally operated by the federally-subsidized Pacific Mail Steamship Company. This service connected New York and San Francisco via an overland crossing in Panama. The isthmian crossing was dramatically improved in 1855 with the opening – and here is a pub trivia nugget – of the world's first transcontinental railroad, the 47 mile Wall Street-owned Panama Railroad.

The initial U.S. steam subsidies called for the Pacific coast terminus of this route to be in the Oregon territory, rather than in San Francisco. After lengthy contractual negotiations, the U.S. state granted Pacific Mail's request to make San Francisco the hub of its operations, a decision that helped to establish the city as the chief U.S. Pacific port. Pacific Mail's decision to base a coaling depot, shipyard, and ironworks in nearby Benicia marked the beginnings of industrialization in California. Meanwhile, the decision to make New York the sole North Atlantic terminus furthered the gap between that city and its rivals such as Boston and Baltimore. The importation of gold from California in the 1850s contributed to the development of the city's burgeoning financial services industry, helping it lay the foundations required to one day compete with London.





Pacific Rail Road bond

It would not be an overstatement to call the development of the Panama route a 'transportation revolution.' New York and San Francisco were now well within a month of each other – previously, it had taken (depending upon winds) somewhere in the region of 4 months to sail around the Cape Horn route. Americans in the mid-nineteenth century worried that their distant Pacific coast possessions would opt for independence, just as the thirteen colonies had done from Britain in 1776. That this did not happen owed much to the success of the isthmian steam transport routes. Today's popular culture celebrates the pioneers who crossed North America in covered wagons in search of a gold in California. But the data suggests that more settlers reached California from the Eastern seaboard via Panama (or its rival route in Nicaragua) than did through the overland South Pass. The establishment of increasingly affordable steam transport to California preceded the gold rush and should be seen as a driver of, rather than a response to, migration patterns.

The Panama route also pointed the way toward a future mode of U.S. imperialism. Many of the hallmarks of U.S. policy in the Caribbean (and, indeed, beyond) in the twentieth century were first pioneered along the isthmian route: the negotiation of treaties that granted special privileges to the United States; the landing of the marines to restore order; and, the political agency of U.S. business interests on the ground. Historians recently have attributed the formation of such imperialist relations to cultural factors, or the distinctive nationalist ideology of 'manifest destiny.' The centrality of the Panama route to the U.S. nation-building project, however, suggests that any interpretation of U.S. imperialism needs to take into account the politics and economics of its steam transport systems. The parallels with the British Empire – one thinks here of its network of coaling stations and military interventions to control strategic passageways – again come to mind.

The success of the Panama route emboldened Pacific Mail, which rapidly became one of the largest shipping companies in the world. In 1867 the company inaugurated the world's first regular transpacific steam service, connecting San Francisco to Yokohama, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. The following decade Pacific Mail opened a service from San Francisco to Australia and New Zealand – though, having fallen out of favour with the U.S. government, this service was only made possible by subsidies from the British colonies. As with the Panama route, these transpacific services were of long-term significance, not least because they necessitated the acquisition of a coaling station in Midway, which would become an important U.S. naval base in the following century. The new steamship connections pump-primed the connections between the United States and the Far East; in particular, they facilitated a rapid increase of Chinese migration.




As a consequence, Pacific Mail became one of the chief targets of the growing sinophobic lobby in California.

The heyday of U.S. oceanic steam-shiping proved to be relatively brief. By the late nineteenth century, the United States' shipping industry lagged far behind its foreign rivals. The problem was in part political: the U.S. state rescinded the subsidies that foreign states lavished on their shipping industries. This left old companies like Pacific Mail at a disadvantage when new British and Japanese rivals entered the transpacific market. The opening of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885, followed by the establishment of a transpacific shipping line from Vancouver to the Far East, created an 'all-British' route to rival the old U.S. transport network established several decades earlier.

Diminishing political support at home was symptomatic of a deeper problem: the shipping industry in America was on the losing end of a competition with the mighty transcontinental railroads. The Panama route could undercut the rates of the overland transcontinental rail network. It was also surprisingly competitive when it came to time (because of various changes and timetabling considerations, it usually took freight three weeks to journey from New York to San Francisco by rail in this period – only a week or so faster than the Panama route). The 'robber barons' of the rail industry thus did everything they could to neutralize their rival: they won the battle for political support and subsidies in Washington; they bought up shares of Pacific Mail and put their lackeys on the board of directors; and, finally, once their rival was weakened, they imposed non-compete clauses upon it in exchange for monthly subsidies that kept the shipping lines afloat. The result of all this was that many of the steamers plying the Panama route in the late nineteenth century were half empty – and transcontinental passenger and freight rates were kept high.

Railroad domination of the U.S. shipping industry illustrates how unregulated competition inhibited the efficient integration of markets and, indeed, the international presence of the United States. But – speaking personally now – the success of the railroads brought with it a pay-off to this researcher: Pacific Mail was ultimately swallowed up by the railroad empire of Collis Huntington. As a result, the shipping company's records are today housed in the Huntington Library in Pasadena, California – not only one of the world's most beautiful archives, but also one near LAX airport, which United Airlines services direct from Heathrow.



Party Balance, Partisan Polarization, and Policy Conflict

Established by Rivington and Joan Winant in honour of Rivington's father, Ambassador John G. Winant, United States Ambassador to Great Britain from 1941 to 1946, the Winant Visiting Chair in American Government each year brings to Oxford a distinguished scholar of American politics and government. In 2014-15, it was held by Byron Shafer, Hawkins Chair of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin.

Byron Shafer received his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley. His interests include political parties, institutional reform, American political development, national party conventions, electoral campaigns, and classical political science. His six major monographs include: *Quiet Revolution: The Struggle for the Democratic Party and the Shaping of Post-Reform Politics*; *Bifurcated Politics: Evolution and Reform in the National Party Convention*; *The End of Southern Exceptionalism: Class, Race, and Partisan Change in the Postwar South* (with Richard Johnston); and *The American Political Landscape* (with Richard Spady).



Byron Shafer (John Cairns)

It was my privilege and pleasure to be the John G. Winant Visiting Professor at the RAI, *Professor Shafer writes*. There was a small set of formal responsibilities associated with the post, which are easily described. For me and I suspect for most Winant Professors, there were also some major intangibles, which are in their nature less easily captured on paper:

I gave the main lecture series supporting the undergraduate Politics, Philosophy, and Economics paper on American Government and Politics. I had in fact done this for seventeen-plus years in the distant past [as Oxford's Mellon Professor of American Government]. I retailed those lectures for what is now Wisconsin's 'Honors Introduction to American Government'. So it was easy enough to retail again for a return to what was in some sense their origin.

In January, I gave the Winant Memorial Lecture, on 'Party Balance, Partisan Polarization, and Policy Conflict in American Politics, 1932-2016'. Scholars have more and more lost the sense of temporal sweep in understanding American politics, their sense of what derived from what. At the same time, they are no longer driven to assemble the more precise pieces of scholarship on that politics into some larger whole – a big picture, the context within which those smaller pieces exist.

The Winant Lecture was a chance to answer my own challenge – "OK, wise guy; let's see you do it" – and see if I could put eighty years of American politics together in forty minutes, emphasizing the main influences and de-emphasizing the ephemera. If the audience did not revolt, the Winant Professorship would provide the opportunity to try to move the lecture into a book. So it proved. Some sharp, useful questions at the lecture were helpful in this transition. We now have a draft of the preface and the four main chapters, along with a rough draft of the conclusion.

I also had the chance to pull together a seminar series with visiting speakers. There were scholarly presentations on economic inequality and American politics, on women in American politics, and on the American role in the world. There were also visits from two professional campaign consultants who talked about what they do and in one case really demonstrated how it is done. I find that the difference between how scholars and practitioners think about American politics is a topic worth understanding by students and colleagues.

Beyond that, there are those intangibles. The Balliol connection to the Professorship added a new and different college to my range of Oxford experiences, while the chance to reconnect with friends and colleagues at Nuffield (where I was Acting Warden when I first left Oxford) was treasured. And it was a pleasure to tread familiar streets and visit old haunts. The good news and the bad news about the latter are really the same: the university describes itself as in constant change, but I found it to be remarkably familiar.

Congress to Campus brings Dennis Hertel and Claudine Schneider to the RAI

Each year, 'Congress to Campus' is the highlight of the RAI's programme to engage wide audiences in the politics, history and literature of the United States. Organised in association with the British Library's Eccles Centre, March 2015 saw former US Representatives Dennis Hertel (D-Michigan) and Claudine Schneider (R-Rhode Island) share their experiences of American politics with students from local schools. **Amy Alden**, a pupil at Oxford's Cheney School, reports here on her experience of the day.

This year I was given the opportunity to attend the Congress to Campus event at the Rothermere American Institute in the interest of furthering my A-Level education by gaining an invaluable insight into the world of American democracy.

Upon arrival it was wonderful to see students from far beyond the locality of Oxford and to really appreciate the academic ambition that filled the room. We were then able to hear from the esteemed Claudine Schneider and Dennis Hertel, both of whom shared with us the heartfelt inspirational stories that led to their desire to enter into public office. This has allowed me to understand what one experiences during congressional candidacy on a very personal level; learning about the obstacles they had to overcome and the achievements that they aimed to make.

Once opening statements had commenced, the floor was opened to all students who were given the opportunity to ask the questions of their choice. This contributed greatly to my individual understanding of the bipartisan system in the context of current world affairs. During this session I was expecting some contention to arise due to the more difficult questions being asked but instead I found that on many occasions they reached similar conclusions – something very inspiring to see in a world where political opinion can be very polarised!

The event for Sixth Form students concluded with a wonderful lunch at which I was given the opportunity to speak directly to Claudine and Dennis in a more informal setting. They answered all of my questions and left me feeling exceptionally at ease going forward into the rest of my studies. Leaving this event, I felt as if not only my A Level studies had immeasurably benefited but as a student with a keen interest in pursuing an education in the USA I also now feel more convinced than ever that America is the place that I want to be!

Needless to say, this absolutely exceptional opportunity has left me an advocate of not only the Congress to Campus event but the Rothermere American Institute itself.



Dennis Hertel (John Cairns)



Dennis Hertel, Claudine Schneider and Philip Davies (John Cairns)

"This absolutely exceptional opportunity has left me an advocate of not only the Congress to Campus event but the Rothermere American Institute itself."

Amy Alden, Cheney School



San Francisco, California in 1851

Gold Rush Imperialism: Dr Benjamin Mountford and Dr Stephen Tuffnell

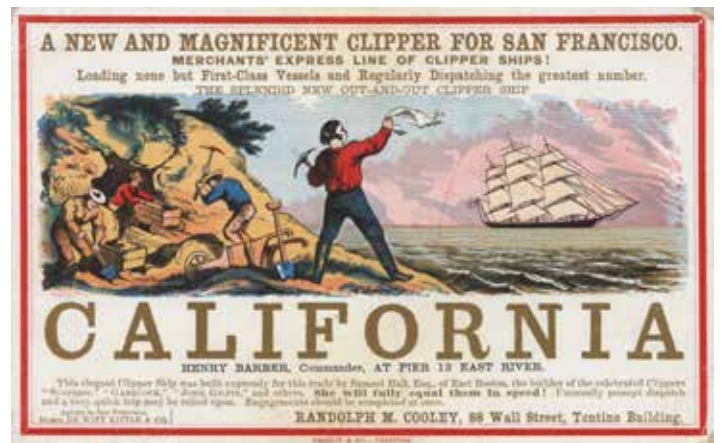
In the booming but remote Western Australian town of Kalgoorlie, home to almost two thousand hatters, diggers and fortune-hunters, Herbert Hoover, recently arrived from California, struggled to adjust to life in the distant British colony. 'It is a country of red dust, black flies, and white heat', he wrote in October 1897. 'Every man here talks of "when I go home"', he continued, 'none come to stay except those who die, and few go away as well off as they came'.

If life on the goldfields was unforgiving, it was also mercurial. 'The prospector lives a hard life', Hoover reflected years later, 'in a tinted atmosphere of already estimated fortune – or one about to be estimated – and therefore drank champagne as a beverage'. The future president nonetheless thrived in the boom and bust of the global gold industry. In a career spanning 20 years and six continents, requiring the mastery of eight languages, Hoover assayed and invested in many of the world's wealthiest mines. He was a pivotal intermediary in the transfer of American expertise around the globe and the management of colonial labour forces on behalf of European empires.

The global circulation of engineers, expertise, and capital typified the careers of Hoover and his peers and were among the themes considered at 'Gold Rush Imperialism', a two-day conference at the RAI in April 2015. A collaboration with Oxford University's Centre for Global History (www.global.history.ox.ac.uk), the conference welcomed historians from across America, Australasia, Africa, and Europe to consider the global history of gold rushes. Over two days of lectures and panel sessions, more than 60 scholars, students, friends of the RAI, and visitors debated the significance of the great gold rushes of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Gold whetted the appetites of empire builders to extend imperial frontiers, map interior spaces, and connect ports to distant centres of production via complex communications, information and migration networks. The drive to exploit new discoveries fostered transnational flows of capital, labour, technology, culture and politics. All these processes had national and imperial dimensions that accelerated the integration of global markets and economies. In the gold fields, rushes could initiate profound and complex processes of political, social, and economic change. Gold might bring with it a new sense of cosmopolitanism, freedom and economic opportunity – but it might also incite political, social, and racial tensions, reinforce systems of coercion, and prompt new ones. The aim of 'Gold Rush Imperialism' was to interrogate these intersections and interactions.

For James Belich (Oxford), miners' experiences of gold rushes were shaped by an enduring 'crew' culture. In his keynote address, Belich



examined the long history of gold discoveries and the importance of masculine 'crew' culture to the social world of mining camps. As sailors jumped ship in far-flung ports they transferred the intemperate life of the fo'c's'le to 'golden lands' in the American West, Australia, and southern Africa. Combined with the overwhelming cultural allure of gold itself, 'crew' culture gave a vibrant and violent intensity to goldfield life that drew tens of thousands of goldseekers into risk-taking feats in search of the precious metal the world over.

Panel discussions considered transnational and comparative connections between gold rushes. 'Frontiers: Settler Societies, State Power, and the Pathways of Gold Rushes', chaired by Miles Larmer (Oxford), positioned California as the catalyst for a wave of gold rushes that fanned across the Pacific. Papers by Elliott West (Arkansas) on 'The Great Coincidence: The California Gold Rush and its Transformations'; David Goodman (Melbourne) on 'Fundamental Choices and Assumptions in the Cycle of British World Gold Rushes, 1829-1870'; and from conference convenor Benjamin Mountford





Nome, Alaska in 1900

report on a flagship conference at the RAI



San Francisco harbour in 1850 or 1851

(Oxford) on the struggle for order at the Pacific gold rushes, emphasised the international connections that transformed political and legal regimes in British and American imperial borderlands.

The decades from the 1850s to the turn of the twentieth century witnessed the greatest series of mining booms in history, triggering an allied series of share 'manias' on western stock markets that cemented gold's place at the centre of the global economy. Mass transfers of capital, rapid industrial specialisation, and high-risk financial speculation placed gold at the centre the development of global capitalism. Chaired by Erik Eklund (Federation and UC Dublin), 'Capital and Capitalism: The Economics of Gold Rushes' brought together papers from Jan-Georg Deutsch (Oxford) on 'The Rush for Gold: Economic Imperialism, Primitive Accumulation and Time-Space Compression, c. 1848-1914'; Cassandra Mark-Thiesen (Basel) on "'The Johannesburg of West Africa" That Did Not Come True: Ghana's Moment in the Global Rush for Gold'; and Ian Phimister (Free State) on 'Frenzied Finance: Gold Mining in the Globalising South, c. 1886-1896.'

Originating deep in the earth, gold is most accessible as alluvial deposits found in river and creek beds. But placer gold is only a tiny proportion of the original source. The technological challenges faced by professional engineers to extract gold from quartz seams descending deep below ground and the environmental consequences of the decisions they took were the subject of the panel, 'The Conquest of Nature: Industrial Technologies, Expertise, and the Environment of Gold Rushes'. In 'Engineering Gold Rushes: Expertise, Technology, and the Mechanics of Globalisation', Stephen Tuffnell (Oxford) uncovered the emergence of a transnational community of engineers dedicated to the global spread of specialist technical and geological knowledge; Andrew Isenberg (Temple) spoke on the devastating environmental impact of hydraulic

engineering on the ecology of California, the Yukon, and Australia in 'The Nature of Gold Rushes: Mining and the Environment in Transnational Perspective'. Keir Reeves (Federation) set these issues in the context of the Tasman world in 'Exploring the Regional and International Historical Connections of the Nineteenth Century South-West Pacific Gold Rushes'.

As gold seams came into the range of new technologies, foreign capital and labour rushed in to develop them. In a closing address, Mae Ngai (Columbia) turned to the centrality of Chinese migrants to the polyglot social worlds of goldfields. 'Chinese gold miners, the "Chinese question", and global politics (1848-1910)', highlighted that the lifeblood of Anglo-American imperial project in the Pacific was dependent on a border-crossing class of Chinese labourers who facilitated the transformation of gold rush societies into industrialised settler societies.

From the 1840s to 1910 gold rushes played a key role in shaping the course of global history. Yet, for a long time, gold rushes have been used by historians as the pivots upon which national histories turn. 'Gold Rush Imperialism' placed gold rushes and goldseekers back in their global historical context as great accelerators connecting regions, nations, and empires via complex networks of communication, information and migration.

The RAI also hosted a companion exhibition on gold rushes, curated by Vere Harmsworth Librarian, Jane Rawson. The exhibition featured materials relating to gold mining from the collections of the Bodleian Library and the Art Gallery of Ballarat, which can be explored online at: <http://www.rai.ox.ac.uk/goldrush/exhibition>. The conference organisers are working on an edited collection of essays emerging from 'Gold Rush Imperialism' and a series of follow-up events.



2014–15 Fellows

Professor Carol Sanger, Barbara Aronstein Black Professor of Law at Columbia Law School, was Senior Visiting Research Fellow, working on abortion regulation and the relationship of law to culture. Professor Bruce Kuniholm, Professor of Public Policy, Professor of History, and Dean Emeritus of the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, returned to the RAI as Duke-Harmsworth Visiting Fellow, for a study of American foreign policy in the Near and Middle East.

Dr Steffen Rimner joined the RAI between postdoctoral assignments at Yale University and Columbia University as Postdoctoral Visiting Research Fellow. He pursued research on global narcotics control in the early 20th century. Professor Paul Kerry (Brigham Young), an expert on history of ideas, particularly political and religious thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and Professor Marc Lafrance (Concordia), who specialises in masculinity and popular culture in modern North America, were Associate Visiting Research Fellows. The RAI also welcomed Dr Marie Favereau, Dr Irina Shingiray, and Dr Bryan Miller as research associates for Professor Pekka Hämäläinen's European Research Council funded project on Nomadic Empires.

Together with Oxford historian Dr Nicholas Cole, Paul Kerry convened throughout Hilary and Trinity terms a Seminar in Constitutional Thought and History in association with Pembroke College, which brought distinguished speakers to Oxford from across the United States and Great Britain. Beginning with Kerry's own paper on 'George Bancroft's History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States of America', the seminar covered diverse topics ranging from 'Aristotle and the American Founding' to 'Revisiting the Fortas Resignation: New Light on Nixon's Campaign to Refashion the Warren Court'. A special colloquium in April on the records of the US Constitutional Convention featured a plenary paper from Mary Sarah Bilder (Boston College), author of the forthcoming book *Madison's Hand: Revising the Constitutional Convention*.



Photo: John Cairns



Photo: John Cairns

"Being a member of the RAI has yielded one of the most enriching experiences of my academic life. Thanks to the Institute's outstanding hospitality, I was able to finish a peer-reviewed article on Asian abolitionism and its US connection, make significant headway in completing my first book on the origins of global narcotics control for Harvard University Press and give talks in Geneva, Konstanz and at Oxford's own China Centre.

An institute by definition committed to transnational perspectives, a circle sustained by collegiality and expertise, a rare community where intellectual inspiration grows naturally from a culture of inquiry and analytic integrity – what more could an aspiring scholar ask for? I am honoured, grateful and much in their debt."

Steffen Rimner, Postdoctoral Scholar at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University and RAI Postdoctoral Visiting Research Fellow, 2014–15

Tax credits, vouchers, and the American education system

The second year of my Postdoctoral Fellowship in US Politics at the RAI has been eventful, *writes Ursula Hackett*. Based at my office in the heart of the Institute, opening onto its beautiful gardens, I have conducted research, organized conferences, taught and supervised, and collaborated with colleagues in Oxford and beyond.

My research focuses on education policy, religion and politics, and the methodology of Qualitative Comparative Analysis, and my current project examines the partial privatization of the American education system through tax credits and vouchers. School vouchers, which offer parents a sum of public money to spend at a private school of their choice, are expanding rapidly in the US. Much of this growth has occurred over the past five years. Voucher programmes currently number fifty-four across twenty-five states. As this delegation of responsibility for publicly funded social programs to non-state actors becomes more common, scholars raise enduring puzzles about policy feedback, racialization, constitutional politics and unusual political coalitions, which I address in my work.

Among the particular highlights of the year, I hosted an international workshop on religious alliances in March 2015 which drew prominent scholars including David Campbell and Geoffrey Layman (both Notre Dame) and Clyde Wilcox (Georgetown). I addressed the puzzle of why state constitutional provisions are such feeble barriers to school vouchers, and am currently co-editing a symposium of the workshop's papers for the journal *Politics & Religion*. Throughout the year, conversations with RAI visiting professors and fellows Byron Shafer, Marc LaFrance, Paul Kerry, and Steffen Rimner enhanced my work. During the year I also collaborated with Desmond King (Oxford's Mellon Professor of American Government) on papers examining the racial politics of school vouchers. We suggest that tensions between 'racial justice' and 'color blind' claims for school choice are central to the accelerated growth of vouchers. I presented our work at panels at the 2014 American Political Science Association Conference in Washington D.C., and the 2015 Midwest Political Science Conference in Chicago, funded by RAI travel grants.

Three of my papers have been published this year in *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, *Quality & Quantity*, and *The International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. In March I was awarded the Sir Walter Bagehot Prize by the *Political Studies Association* for my 2014 doctoral thesis. Alongside research I have enjoyed teaching and lecturing at the RAI and introducing undergraduate students to the rich resources of the Vere Harmsworth Library. Thanks to RAI lecturing opportunities

I have also recently become a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. I am looking forward to the final year of my fellowship: the superb programme of lectures and seminars, conversations with visiting scholars, and opportunities for further collaborations.



Ursula Hackett (John Cairns)

"As the delegation of responsibility for publicly funded social programs to non-state actors becomes more common, scholars raise enduring puzzles about policy feedback, racialization, constitutional politics and unusual political coalitions, which I address in my work."

Ursula Hackett, RAI and Nuffield College Postdoctoral Fellow in US Politics



Ursula Hackett receives the Sir Walter Bagehot Prize from The Rt. Hon. John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons (Political Studies Association)



Travel awards for primary research in the United States

Thanks to the generous support of its friends and benefactors, each year the RAI offers travel awards to undergraduate and graduate students to allow them to undertake primary research in the United States. **Jane Dinwoodie** was the recipient of one such award in 2014-15. An undergraduate at Cambridge, she came to Oxford to work under the supervision of Professor Pekka Hämmäläinen for her doctoral thesis, 'Beyond Removal: Indians, States and Sovereignties in the American South during the Long Nineteenth Century'.

My doctoral research explores the histories of those Native Americans who remained in the American South following the Indian Removals of the 1820s and 1830s, particularly focusing on negotiations between non-removed indigenous people and the United States. The RAI travel grant allowed me to make a much-needed trip to the collect primary documents towards the end of my first year of research. I would like to thank the Institute and its benefactors for this award.

I travelled to the National Archives in Washington D.C. in summer 2014. During a two-week trip, I consulted the papers of the Bureau of Indian Affairs: the branch of federal government historically responsible for dealings with indigenous peoples, usually called the Office of Indian Affairs before 1947. In particular, I explored microfilm copies of the correspondence which the Office received during the nineteenth century. A core source base for my dissertation, these documents provided vital insights into negotiations between the US state and non-removed indigenous peoples, and the ways in which non-removed Indians shaped realities of Southern sovereignty across the century.

During this trip, I focussed my attention on the Cherokees: a key group that I investigate in my thesis. I explored a range of sources spanning from the early 1820s through to the mid-nineteenth century. Although astonished by the number of post-removal Cherokees I encountered, I looked particularly for a group known as the Oconaluftee (or 'Lufty') Cherokees, who took personal reservations under 1817 and 1819 treaties with the US, and went on to avoid Removal. Over the course of my trip, I was able to see how individual Cherokees – beyond the oft-explored elites – negotiated with the United States across a turbulent period in Southern history, and how state officials interpreted their ongoing presence and claims to sovereignty.

However, the documentary record also contained many silences. Traditionally interpreted by historians as a lack of evidence, I aim to use these silences as a basis to explore what the US state overlooked or misunderstood about non-removed peoples. I

found repeated instances where non-removed Cherokees simply did not appear in these federal records, and where officials misunderstood – or simply could not see – groups who retreated into difficult terrain such as woods or mountains. These gaps also provide important insights into non-removed Cherokees' own perspectives. The officials' observations and silences reveal moments when indigenous peoples chose to approach the federal government and, just as importantly, the occasions on which they deliberately chose to avoid it.

This trip was invaluable to my D.Phil. research. By visiting D.C., I was able to unearth untold stories from well-used sources, furthering my overall aim of exploring how indigenous stories can fundamentally change the ways we think about the American South, sovereignty, and the state. I am immensely grateful to the RAI and its benefactors for the funding which enabled me to access this material.



Jane Dinwoodie (right) with fellow RAI graduate students Skye Montgomery and Kathryn Olivarius (Kathryn Olivarius)

“Over the course of my trip, I was able to see how individual Cherokees – beyond the oft-explored elites – negotiated with the United States across a turbulent period in Southern history, and how state officials interpreted their ongoing presence and claims to sovereignty.”

Jane Dinwoodie



View of New Orleans in the 1840s, by Lewis Henry



The RAI has made seventeen awards to outstanding undergraduate and graduate students to enable research in the United States during the 2015–16 academic year:

Christopher Brown, D.Phil. in History, St Anne's College: *The Republican Party and Isolationism between 1945 and 1960*.

James and Holly Coyne Award, for research at the Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, Kansas, and the Indiana Historical Society.

Alice Duffy, B.A. in History and Politics, Keble College: *The Role of Symbolism and Ceremony in US-USSR Diplomacy during the Cold War*.

John G. Winant Award for research in the Reagan and Nixon Presidential Libraries in California.

Johanne Fernandes, B.A. in History, Hertford College: "War is war and not popularity seeking:" *Sherman's Military Strategy, Total War, and Civilian Life in the Occupation of Atlanta*.

Friends of the RAI Award for archival research at the University of Georgia.

Louisa Hotson, D.Phil. in History, Corpus Christi College: *Scholarly Solutions: American Political Science and the 'Challenge of Democracy' 1880-1970*.

John G. Winant Award for research at Berkeley and Stanford university archives.

Sebastian Huempfer, D.Phil. in Economic History, Green Templeton College: *The Political Economy of U.S. Trade Policy, 1945-1967*.

John G. Winant Award for research in the Yale University and University of Connecticut archives.

Horatio Joyce, D.Phil. in History, St Cross College: *New York Clubland: A Social and Architectural History, 1879-1920*.

Award for research at the New-York Historical Society.

Brian Kwoba, D.Phil. in History, Pembroke College: *The Impact of Hubert Henry Harrison on Black Politics 1909-1927*.

Friends of the RAI Award for archival research at Howard University, Washington D.C.

Skye Montgomery, D.Phil. in History, Corpus Christi College: *Anglo-American Kinship and National Identities in the American South, 1840-1880*.

Award for archival research at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Kathryn Olivarius, D.Phil. in History, Lincoln College: *Making Louisiana a Slave State, Making the U.S. a Slave Nation: New Perspectives on the Louisiana Purchase, 1769 to 1820*.

Award for archival research at the New Orleans Public Library, Louisiana State University, and the Mississippi State Archives.

Robert Puckett, M.Phil. in International Relations, St Antony's College: *The U.S. Congress's Periodic Withholding of United Nations Dues Payments since the 1980s*.

John G. Winant Award for archival research at the Library of Congress and the UN Secretariat Archival Fonds, New York.

Jeanne Provencher, M.Phil. in Politics, Keble College: *The Black Power Movement and Imprisonment*.

John G. Winant Award for research at the National Archives, Washington D.C.

Thomas Robinson, B.A. in Politics, Philosophy and Economics, St Anne's College: *Why Did Measure 91 Succeed in Oregon when Measure 80 Failed Two Years Prior?*

John G. Winant Award for research in Portland, Oregon.

Daniel Rowe, D.Phil. in History, Lincoln College: *The Long Economic Crisis: Reconstructing America in a Decade of Upheaval and Uncertainty, 1974-1984*.

John G. Winant Award for archival research at the Detroit Public Library, University of Pennsylvania, and City University of New York.

Adam Ward, M.Phil. in Politics, Exeter College: *The Effect of Legislative Professionalism on Opposition Party Behaviour in American State Legislatures*.

John G. Winant Award for research at the Oregon and Massachusetts state archives.

Kyle Wehner, M.Phil. in Politics, St Cross College: *A Comparative Analysis of Indigenous Voter Mobilization since 2000*.

John G. Winant Award for research in Apache County, Arizona, and McKinley County, New Mexico.

Lewis Willcocks, M.Phil. in Economic and Social History, St Cross College: *A Comparative Study of Child Labour in the British and American Industrial Revolutions*.

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

Alexandra Wilson, B.A. in Politics, Philosophy and Economics, University College: *An Investigation into the Effects of the Police Shootings of African American People on Males' and Females' Attitudes to the Police Aged 15-21 Years*.

John G. Winant Award for research in Washington D.C., New York and New Jersey.



Conferences and events

From 'The Rights of the Political Minority in America' to 'The Gift of the Gab: The Writer, the Artist and their Words', the RAI once again hosted a broad range of conferences and events in 2014-15, spanning American history, politics, international relations, and literature.

The **Rights of the Political Minority in America** conference met at the RAI in September 2014 in the shadow of a debate about the future of the rules governing the filibuster in the U.S. Senate, where the rights of individual senators and the minority party to hold up business have never seemed stronger, but also in the context of a period in which the rights of minority parties in state-level governments seem as weak as they have ever been. The conference brought together historians and political scientists, with papers on both the conditions under which minority parties have asserted their rights within legislatures, and on minority-party rights in the wider discourse of American politics and in works of political philosophy.

The RAI's annual graduate history conference in 2015 took the theme **Consent in Early America, 1600-1900**. Graduate students from across the UK, continental Europe and the US gave papers examining consent in various contexts, from government to family, health, or justice, including presentations such as 'Marriage and the Notion of Consent in Early American Family Law' and 'Coercion, Consent and James Madison's Problem with Popular Rebellion'.

Reconfiguring the Age of Emancipation, a one-day symposium in February 2015, was prompted by the publication of David Brion Davis's *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation*, the final work in a three-volume analysis of the jarring coexistence of evolving systems of democracy with well-honed systems of slavery. Mediated by Professors Annette Gordon-Reed (Harvard and Oxford) and Peter Onuf (Virginia), scholars presented cutting-edge research on black nationalism and colonization.



Photo: John Cairns

In **Reaching Across the Aisles: Religious Alliances in American Politics** scholars considered how, in recent years, religion has become an important fault line in American politics, as a 'coalition of the religious' has squared off against a growing secular population. In 2012, that coalition was tested, as a candidate from a religion unfamiliar to most and controversial to some sought the White House. The symposium assessed what effect, if any, Mitt Romney's Mormonism had on his presidential bid. More generally, it analysed the political and social consequences of increasing religious diversity in the US – including a growing Muslim population and a rising tide of secularism. Professor David Campbell (Notre Dame) gave the keynote lecture, 'One Nation Under God(s)? The Politics of Religious Diversity in the United States'.



Photo: John Cairns

Once again in 2015, the RAI's interdisciplinary summer school proved a highlight of the summer. This year's course, **The Gift of the Gab: The Writer, the Artist and their Words**, explored the ways in which the rhythms of the spoken word have informed poetry, plays and novels as well as the visual and performed arts. Students engaged with the work of Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, and T.S. Eliot, and the lyrics of Joni Mitchell and Tom Waits among others. The course emphasised the role of conversation and dialogue in literature and drama, including examples from songs and ballads as well as oral literature. The summer school again culminated in a theatrical performance from the acclaimed American playwright Elisabeth Gray. **Testament** explored the continued imprint of Biblical narratives on the Southern psyche, accompanied by authentic southern tunes from award-winning folk musician Jack Harris.

Undergraduate teaching at the RAI

Undergraduate lectures and seminars are at the heart of the RAI's academic programme, alongside the Institute's advanced research seminars and conferences. For the B.A. in History alone, Oxford offers seven specialist papers in American history: 'Britain's North American Colonies from Settlement to Independence, 1600-1812', 'From Colonies to Nation: the History of the United States 1776-1877', 'The History of the United States since 1863', 'Haiti and Louisiana: The Problem of Revolution in the Age of Slavery', 'The Age of Jefferson, 1774-1826', 'Slavery and the Crisis of the Union, 1854-1865', and 'Race, Religion, and Resistance in the United States from Jim Crow to Civil Rights'. Three of the courses taught at the RAI are profiled below.

Haiti and Louisiana: The Problem of Revolution in the Age of Slavery is a new course offered to first year history undergraduates. The course introduces students to the first, and one of the most powerful, world systems of the modern era – the Atlantic vectors that sustained and profited from the production of sugar using slave labour in the greater Caribbean. That the French, Haitian and American Revolutions were interconnected is a staple of the so-called 'Age of the Democratic Revolution'. That this interconnection centred on slavery as much as on the power of revolutionary ideas, and that such interconnection renewed the power of despotism in Europe (in the process isolating America from an Atlantic trading world) while at the same time strengthening the institution of slavery via westward expansion in the fledgling democracy of the United States is less often considered. The rise and fall of slavery and abolition in the United States and the West Indies was not, the course demonstrates, determined by national factors alone.

Second and third year undergraduates considering **The Age of Jefferson, 1774-1826** use Jefferson's life and writings to address a number of questions about the age in which Thomas Jefferson lived. For example, what was the impress of the Enlightenment on the conduct of government and intellectual enquiry during this period? Was Jefferson's racism and hostility to the abolition of slavery *sui generis* or widely held? What were the origins and influence of 'Jeffersonian' theories of democracy? How far were men in Jefferson's position able to embrace 'the age of the common man'? What value should historians place on intellectual or political consistency? To what extent is America an exceptional nation?



Photo: John Cairns

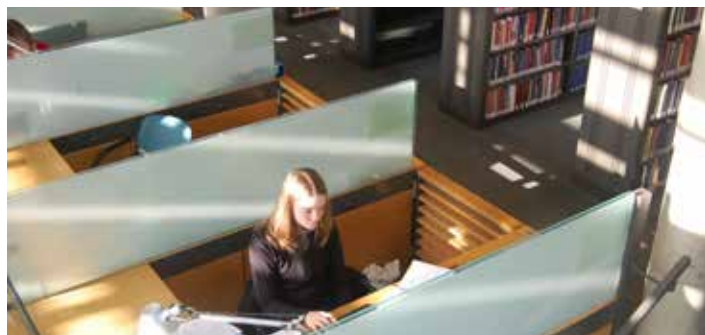
A feature of Oxford's undergraduate history curriculum for more than seventy years, the **Slavery and the Crisis of the Union, 1854-1865** course exposes students to questions about the origins and unfolding of America's extreme moral, political and constitutional crisis. Why was the pre-war Union unable to tolerate the plural visions and diverse institutions of its people? Was the descent into war more a measure of institutional weakness than of the intensity of moral conflict? What were the constituent elements of the competing wartime 'nationalisms' that evolved north and south? How and why did a war over the Union become a war about slavery and emancipation? Why did the war not become an international conflict? What realistic chance had the Confederacy's bid for freedom? Did the governmental, socio-economic and racial changes wrought by war constitute a 'second American revolution'? Prescribed texts address these problems from the political watershed of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, introduced in January 1854, to Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox and the assassination of President Lincoln in April 1865.

The Vere Harmsworth Library in 2014–15

Following a successful trial last year, we have this year increased our term time opening hours to 56 per week by the extension of Saturday opening until 4pm. The extra hours have continued to prove popular, contributing to a 14% increase in readers coming into the library in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14, writes *Jane Rawson, the Vere Harmsworth Librarian*.

A particular highlight this year was the exhibition held in April to accompany the conference on Gold Rush Imperialism. The exhibition was planned and curated by the Librarian along with the conference organisers, Ben Mountford and Steve Tuffnell, and Lucy McCann from the Bodleian Special Collections Department, bringing together materials relating to gold rushes around the world from across the Bodleian's collections. From the Vere Harmsworth Library this mostly consisted of travellers' reports and guidebooks from the California Gold Rush, which we have in great number. The centrepiece of the exhibition was an actual nugget of gold from a mine in Tanganyika, donated to Rhodes House Library in 1978. Following the conference, an online version of the exhibition with photographs of the items included has been made available at www.rai.ox.ac.uk/goldrush/exhibition.

In terms of collections, our most significant purchase was access to the online archives of three major American political magazines: *The Nation*, *National Review* and *The New Republic*. While we have long subscribed to all three in print, acquiring the online archives greatly improves their usability for researchers, who can now carry out full-text searches across all three archives at once. We continue to acquire books at a rapid rate, adding almost 2,000 new volumes to our collection over the course of the year. Alongside purchases and receipts under the UK legal deposit scheme, we are grateful to all those who have donated books over the course of the year. We are especially grateful, as ever, to the Association of American Rhodes Scholars for their ongoing support of the Aydelotte-Kieffer-Smith collection, to which we will add a further 83 books this year.



While our extensive and ever-growing primary source collections mean that students and researchers at the RAI can conduct a huge amount of research without leaving Oxford, there is still often no substitute for travelling to libraries and archives in the United States. In order to help support students here who are planning research trips, and particularly those for whom it is their first such experience, we have this year put together an online guide to archival research in the US. The guide contains information about key research libraries such as the Library of Congress and US National Archives, as well as tips for how to plan effectively and make the most of a trip. It is available online at <http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/us-archives>; we hope it may also be of interest to friends in the wider American studies community, so please do feel free to share the link and pass on any feedback.



Gold Rush exhibition

We are always delighted to welcome visitors to the library. You can find us online both on the RAI website at www.rai.ox.ac.uk/vhl and our own site at www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/vhl. We also have a blog (<http://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/vhl>), Facebook (facebook.com/VereHarmsworthLibrary) and Twitter (twitter.com/vhllib) if you want to keep up with our news.



The RAI's finances and fundraising

The exceptional generosity of the RAI's benefactors made 2014 a record year for the Campaign for the RAI. The Institute received £1.135 million in donations and written pledges – more than twice the Institute's annual budget. Donations received in 2014 included £150,000 in support of an endowed graduate scholarship in American History; two donations each of \$100,000 in support of the RAI's general programme; \$50,000 towards an endowed postdoctoral fellowship in American history, and \$50,000 to cover general operating expenses.

The Rothermere American Institute is particularly grateful to those donors who have made or pledged major gifts during the past year: Joan Winant, the Robertson Foundation, William and Camille Broadbent, Nicolas Ollivant, Michael and Laura Aronstein, and a benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous.

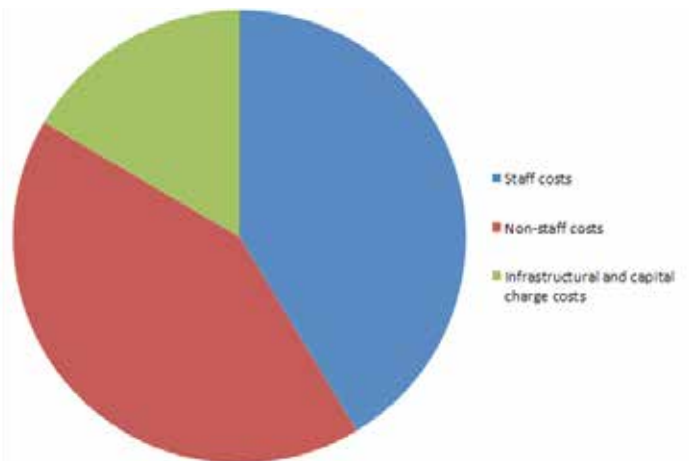
The RAI's cost of raising funds remained low, amounting to approximately £60,000 in 2014. This comprised the employment of the Director of Development, Huw David, and other costs associated with fundraising, such as travel and events at the RAI and in the U.S. A total cost of raising funds of approximately £60,000, set against £1.135 million in cash and pledges received, amounts to a cost of raising funds of less than 6%. This compares very favourably to charitable benchmarks.

In 2014/15, the RAI generated revenue of £507,800 (2013/14: £509,200), comprising an income of £202,100 from its endowment funds (2013/14: £266,400), £249,000 from donations spent in-year (2013/14: £178,300), £29,800 in student fees (2013/14: £20,500), and £26,900 in other income (2013/14: £23,400). Expenditure of £507,800 (2013/14: £518,400) comprised £209,900 in pay (2013/14: £208,800), £213,800 in non-pay expenses (2013/14: £217,800) and £84,100 in infrastructural and capital costs (2013/14: £91,800).

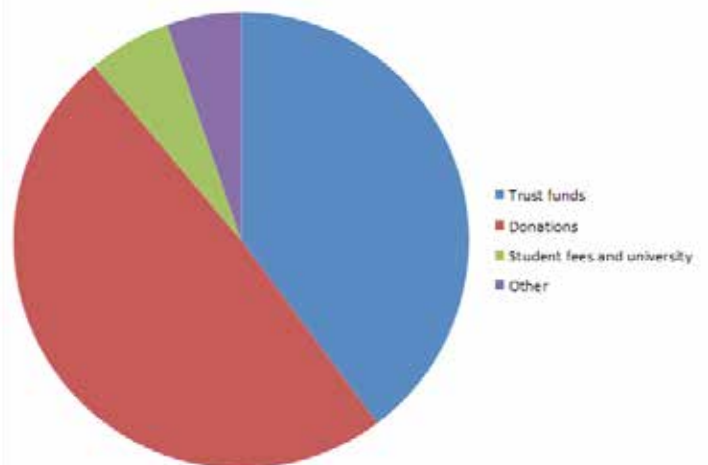
The Institute was able to add £113,200 in donations to the endowment funds which underpin its operating costs and scholarships during 2014/15. These endowments stood at £7,845,112 in market value in May 2015.

Major infrastructural projects undertaken at the RAI during the year have included the relaying of the Institute's parking area, shared with neighbouring university departments, and the second phase of a three-year programme to replace all lighting in the building with LED fittings. Supported by the university's sustainability fund, this project promises to significantly reduce the RAI's energy costs and carbon output.

Expenditure 2014 - 15



Income 2014 - 15





Become a 'Friend of the RAI'

The Institute's new Friends of the RAI initiative provides a great opportunity to support the Institute's mission: to promote the better understanding of the history, culture and politics of the United States.

The generosity of benefactors, trusts and foundations makes possible all that the Rothermere American Institute does. Our Friends are our partners in this endeavour:

It costs us, for example:

- £10,000 p.a. to sustain the RAI's programme of **travel awards**, allowing outstanding students to pursue research in the United States. Pages 14 and 15 of this report describe some of these projects.
- £5,000 p.a. to provide essential **hardship grants** for students encountering unexpected financial distress.
- £10,000 to run the RAI's **world-class research seminars** in American history, politics, and literature.

We can sustain these activities only by securing the funds to do so – and Friends of the RAI are making a vital contribution.

In token of their support, **for an annual donation of £40 (\$80)**, Friends receive:

- A 'Friend of the RAI' certificate
- A stylish RAI pin badge
- A copy of the *RAI Annual Report*
- Regular email updates – the Director's monthly *RAI Matters*; a termcard at the start of each term; and a weekly update of forthcoming events
- A standing invitation to Coffee and Conversation, every Tuesday at 11am during term
- A warm welcome at all RAI public lectures and seminars

And **for an annual donation of £80 (\$150)**, Friends receive all of this, plus a personally dedicated copy of a book by an RAI author – this year, Jay Sexton's acclaimed *Debtor Diplomacy: Finance and American Foreign Relations in the Civil War Era, 1837–1873*.



Ambassador Matthew Barzun - Photo: John Cairns

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Photo: John Cairns

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