



Rothermere American Institute Annual Report 2022–23

ROTHERMERE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
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Director's Foreword

Adam Smith

The RAI has twin objectives: to support outstanding research and to communicate that research beyond the University. The report you are holding gives a flavour of how we have done those things over the last academic year. The building is quiet as I write this on a sunny Friday afternoon in mid-July. Trinity term is behind us, most of our research students are away in archives, and those that remain are in the final stretches of dissertation writing. But until recently, this place has been a hive of activity. Over the last year, we have hosted more than 40 research seminars in American history and literature, 8 book launches and 16 other workshops or discussions of various kinds. And then there are our public lectures, not to mention the five major conferences we have hosted. We have also welcomed half a dozen Fellows-in-Residence and two visiting professors. You can read reports from our Winant Professor of American Government, Lawrie Balfour, on pp. 4–5, from our Harmsworth Professor of American History, Bruce Schulman, on pp. 6–7, and from one of our Fellows-in-Residence, Frank Bowman, on p. 8.

Every Tuesday during term-time, our Fellows, graduate students, and visitors meet for coffee and croissants in our common room. The chatter at this well-attended weekly fixture is testimony, I think, to the warmth and intellectual vibrancy of our community. Our graduate students are the heart of everything we do, and it is the greatest privilege of my job to spend so much time with such an interesting and impressive set of people. The isolating days of Zoom-world now seem like a bad dream.

Our book events and lectures have attracted big audiences, but perhaps our most successful form of public engagement has been our podcast, *The Last Best Hope?* which has had over 100,000 downloads and peaked at no. 3 in the UK podcast charts. We modestly feel that this is a pretty good performance for an independent podcast with no advertising budget, given the competition! If you have not yet discovered it, please search for it on any podcast app. Each episode investigates today's

America through the lens of the past, thinking constantly about why so many people within and outside the United States have believed it to be the “last, best hope of earth”. Recent episodes have included a discussion of Northumbrians' impact on the culture of the Appalachian South, the way the battle of Gettysburg has shaped American identity, the strange career of the Second Amendment and the history of the phrase ‘a city on a hill’. Guests have included Annette Gordon-Reed, David Frum, Kevin Kruse, James Morone, Heather Cox Richardson, Rachel Sheldon and Richard Blackett, among many others.

Given how much we have done this year, it seems invidious to pick out just a few events, but thinking back, I must highlight four. In chronological order, Bruce Schulman's Harmsworth Lecture was a tour-de-force. He made a compelling case that the first decade of the twentieth century is overlooked as a moment of constitutional re-founding. It was precisely the kind of stimulating, big-picture lecture that works so well in that format and was sprinkled with Bruce's characteristic humour. In February, we held a memorable seminar to discuss the necessary, timely, and vexed issue of reparations for slavery led by Lawrie Balfour, our Winant Professor. Then there was the Esmond Harmsworth Lecture in American Arts and Letters, delivered by the novelist Michael Chabon, who described how he thinks with images and material objects while writing. Michael followed this up the next day with a workshop for aspiring writers. And in June, we hosted two days of conversation and celebration to commemorate the centenary of the establishment of the Harmsworth Professorship of American History, which has brought many of the greatest historians of the US to Oxford. You can read more about it on pp. 10–13. The Chancellor of the University, Lord Patten of Barnes; the Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy, Matthew Palmer; and Rhodes Professor Emeritus of American History, Richard Carwardine, all gave speeches at the celebration dinner at Queen's College, which was attended by twenty former Harmsworth Professors.





Top: Harmsworth Centennial Conference, evening reception, 2 June 2023



Above: Harmsworth Professors at Queen's College, 3 June 2023

Standing, L-R: Susanna Fischer (for David Hackett Fischer), David M. Kennedy, Elliott West, Peter C. Mancall, Patrick Griffin, Bruce J. Schulman, Peter S. Onuf, Richard J. M. Blackett, Robin D. G. Kelley, Barbara D. Savage.

Seated, L-R: Kristin Hoganson, Melvyn P. Leffler, James A. Henretta, Lizabeth Cohen, Gary L. Gerstle, Annette Gordon-Reed, David A. Hollinger, J. Morgan Kousser, Elizabeth R. Varon.

None of this would be possible without our donors, and for their generosity with their time and resources over the past year I want to thank, in particular, Mrs Joan Winant and Mr Vyvyan Harmsworth. In many ways, Vyvyan was the originator of the Harmsworth Centennial. In his unstinting and selfless support for American history at Oxford, he has extended a warm hand of friendship to every Harmsworth Professor since 1985. He has done the same to every RAI Director; my job would be a great deal more difficult if not for Vyvyan's advice and support.

Nor, of course, would any of it be possible without my professional services colleagues here at the RAI. Our small team of Katy Long (institute management), Hannah Greiving (events) and Richard Purkiss (communications and facilities) are truly outstanding people, as is Dr Uta Balbier, my Deputy Director. Although organising so many complicated and high-profile events while managing a beautiful but demanding building and keeping on top of the finances is never easy, thanks to them all, we have laughed a lot along the way. ■

A Year in the Winant Chair

Lawrie Balfour

Late in the eighth week of Trinity term, at the very end of Oxford's academic year, I was delighted to have a chance to thank the RAI community for a wonderful six months. The occasion was a half-day symposium on 'Reparations and the Political Imagination', which included a spirited seminar discussion of reparations for slavery and colonialism, and an informal version of the Winant Lecture that was originally scheduled for February and cancelled due to industrial action. As I noted on that June afternoon, Adam Smith, Uta Balbier, Katy Long, Hannah Greiving, and Richard Purkiss, and the RAI's Fellows and Postgraduate Members have created something quite special and rare—a place where visitors feel welcome instantly and where it's possible to have as much intellectual comradeship and stimulation *and* as much space for solitary thinking as anyone could want.

For me, the symposium was a fitting capstone to my time at the RAI. Although the group of participants was small enough to fit around a seminar table, they represented the richness of intellectual life at a place that hosts scholars from multiple disciplines and at every stage of their careers, as well as artists and activists whose work bridges the theory/practice divide. The Winant Professorship allowed me to conceive and begin to write a new book on the politics of reparations for Black Americans at a time when the debate is changing dramatically. What makes this moment both unique and fraught is that reparations demands have acquired unprecedented political traction. With new possibilities for meaningful social change come heightened dangers of racist backlash. I laid out preliminary ideas about how reparations programmes might and might not help to dismantle racial injustice in a lively discussion with Desmond King and an invited audience at Balliol College in February, and presented a more developed version of the argument at the June symposium.

There is no better place to be a scholar of politics and American Studies than the RAI. The opportunity to interact with scholars in

US politics, history, *and* literature is a dream. Regrettably, there was so much happening at the RAI that scheduling conflicts prevented me from participating in as many seminars as I would have liked. I was delighted, though, to have a chance to reconnect with Lloyd Pratt and Jane Shaw and to meet Nicholas Gaskill and other affiliated faculty. During Hilary, I participated in one of Des King's MPhil classes on American politics, and I enjoyed our weekly lunchtime discussions of race and democracy at Nuffield College. Bruce Schulman, Harmsworth Professor of American History, was an exemplary office neighbour and colleague. The Women's Lunches, American Grounds, and the company of so many smart colleagues make the RAI hum. I will especially remember conversations with Emily Brady, Dan Rowe, Sarena Martinez, Mori Reithmayr, and Josh Brown.

I was very lucky to arrive at Oxford in 2023. Being at the RAI for the centennial celebration of the Harmsworth Professorship was a highlight. The conference and Saturday dinner gave me a chance to listen to, meet, and/or become reacquainted with many of the historians who have deeply inspired my work. The timing was also fortuitous for me personally. Having just finished a book, *Toni Morrison: Imagining Freedom*, I had the luxury of reading widely and immersing myself in the life of the University. While the reparations project occupied most of my time, I also began an exploratory study of *Freedomways*, a quarterly review of the Black freedom movement, which ran 1961–85 and provided a site for Black intellectuals, artists, and activists to lay out their visions of progressive social change. Although the journal is available electronically, I loved having time to pore over the original volumes in the Radcliffe Camera.

It is hard to overstate the vibrancy of political theory at Oxford. In January, Sophie Smith included me in a group of feminist theorists from Oxford and the US for a workshop on Shatema Threadcraft's book manuscript and a roundtable conversation on race, gender, and political theory. During Trinity, I delivered a keynote lecture on Morrison and democracy at





May Morning celebrations on the River Cherwell

the Oxford Political Theory Graduate Conference and, a week later, presented a reparations paper at the Critical Theory Workshop (thanks to Jasper Friedrich for organising both invitations). How amazing to spend two terms in the company of Jeanne Morefield, Lois McNay, Sophie Smith, Amia Srinivasan, Cécile Laborde, Daniel Butt, Stuart White, Tim Soutphommasane, Sarah Bufkin, Temi Ogunye, Jamie Draper, Eñiolá Şóyemí, Emily Katzenstein, and many others. Oxford's political theory graduate students are a brilliant group. Meeting them for coffee, meals, and walks indicated how much exciting new work is on the horizon.

Membership of Balliol College is one of the great boons of the Winant Professorship. I am particularly grateful to Sudhir Hazareesingh, Dan Butt, Neta Crawford, and Tim Soutphommasane for making me feel at home and for conversations about politics at every level—from the workings of the University to global systems of power and their legacies. I was also thrilled to see a favourite graduate school professor, Elizabeth Kiss, and to meet Honorary Fellow Oliver Franklin. Consilium dinners offered a chance to get to know an extraordinary group of scholars. After these dinners, I looked forward to the comradeship of my fellow Visiting Fellows, Catherine Marshall and Carolyn Heinrich, as we shared the first part of the walk home. In May, I was honoured to deliver the Omar Azfar Lecture on Social Justice at Sudhir and Dan's invitation. The talk explored Morrison's observation that "modern life begins with slavery", and I continue to think about the profound questions raised by the audience of students, faculty, and alumni.

The UK is home to a wealth of scholars of US politics and political theory. My work benefited from opportunities to present papers at the LSE Political Philosophy Seminar (at the invitation of Paul Apostolidis), the Contemporary Political Theory Seminar at Cambridge (at Duncan Bell's invitation), and Edinburgh University's CRITIQUE Seminar (at Mihaela Mihai's invitation) and to spend time with colleagues from UCL, SOAS, Southampton, Bristol, and elsewhere. If it is a cliché to say that travel gives us the gift of exposing the parochialism of our worldviews, it is nonetheless often true; indeed, I was surprised by the degree to which moving across the Atlantic shifted and enlarged my thinking about democracy in the US.

As a visitor from central Virginia, I felt particularly fortunate to live in East Oxford. Not knowing anything about the geography of the city when I signed the lease, I was excited to discover that my daily commute along Cowley Road was full of cafés, markets, and restaurants from around the world. Equally exciting was joining the Falcon Boat Club, which allowed me to realise a dream of rowing on the Thames.

The John G. Winant Professorship was a unique opportunity for which I will always be thankful. It was also a wellspring of rekindled connections, new friendships, and new ideas. I hope it will be the first of many sojourns in Oxford. ■

Lawrie Balfour is James Hart Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia.

View from the Harmsworth Chair

Bruce Schulman

As I reach the end of my tenure as Harmsworth Professor, I've had the feeling that my coach was about to turn into a pumpkin, and that this princess was about to turn back into an ordinary washerwoman. Reflecting on my imminent departure, though, it seems to me that a better analogy than Cinderella might be the MGM film version of *The Wizard of Oz*: there truly is no place like home, but I will miss the wondrous experiences I have had, and the good friends that I have made.

In the century since the first Harmsworth Professor took up the UK's first-ever chair in the subject, American history at Oxford has become a vibrant intellectual community producing innovative scholarship and training numerous students. The RAI invited me to become part of that enterprise, interacting with and learning from colleagues, postgrads, and undergraduates. At the same time, the fellowship at Queen's welcomed me into college life—something wholly unfamiliar in American academia. Navigating the college's beautiful stone cloister and its sometimes-mysterious language and rituals, and the RAI's sleek, modern corridors, stimulating research seminars, and postgraduate teaching programme, I've found rare intellectual invigoration, all sorts of new experiences, and generous fellowship.

Amid the memorable whirlwind of gaudies, boat races and sub-fusc, invited lectures (I had the opportunity to speak at events in Cambridge, Glasgow, London, Münster, Newcastle, Oslo, and across many Oxford colleges) and graduate seminar meetings, choral evensong and country rambles and second desserts, a few highlights of this year, the centennial of the Harmsworth chair, stand out:

INAUGURAL LECTURE. Processing into the grand South Writing School behind the Divinity Bedel carrying a centuries-old mace, I doffed my cap to the Vice-Chancellor and delivered my inaugural lecture: 'The Forgotten Constitutional Revolution: Amending American Democracy in the Early Twentieth Century'. The lecture explored how and why a nation defined and sometimes stymied by an enduring, almost impossible-to-change constitution (only 27 amendments in

236 years; only eight in the past century) carried out a little-understood constitutional revolution. In the early decades of the twentieth century, Americans ratified four amendments in seven years, invented presidential primaries, and fixed the size of the House of Representatives; in the process, they enduringly defined the structure and redefined the style of American national politics. I argued that the 1910s and 1920s witnessed a series of fundamental—and lasting—shifts in the nature of American governance, American politics, the very structure of democracy in the United States. In the process, Americans participated in a broader process of political experimentation that brought written constitutions for the first time to many places, including Russia, Germany, and Persia, reformed many others, and shaped the numerous new nations emerging in the aftermath of the First World War.

OXFORD ENGLISH GLOSSARY. In January, I returned from a holiday trip to Boston to find signs warning, "Quiet Please, Collections in Progress". Puzzled, I wondered who was collecting what and how one might silently collect anything? It turned out that a 'collection' meant a practice exam. Given the unfamiliar terms that Oxford parlance includes ('battels', 'Michaelmas', 'Torpids', 'termcard'), the University's odd way of telling time (no actual dates, just references like Wednesday of 3rd week, Friday of 8th week) and, especially, the strange meanings attached to common words (course, paper, revise, collection), I wish someone had supplied a glossary!

RAI SYMPOSIUM. In May, I helped to organise 'At the Junction: The Local, Regional, and National in US History'. Attracting scholars at different career stages from both sides of the Atlantic, the symposium investigated relations between and among different scales and levels of American economy, politics, culture and society. The event featured: a keynote address by Edward Ayers (Richmond); four panels that addressed questions of scale in relation to natural resources and power, the media, the glocal United States, and cities; and a concluding discussion led by





MSt seminar at the Harmsworth House, Michaelmas term (autumn) 2022



Room requisitioned for collections (mock examinations), Hilary term (spring) 2023

Brent Cebul (Penn), Julia Guarneri (Cambridge), Andrew Heath (Sheffield) and Sarah Phillips (BU). In addition to excavating the complex workings of federal system, delegates also took up keynote speaker Ayers' suggestion that they strive to bring the depth and texture of local studies to their analyses of national and international events.

BAKE OFF. Every week, the RAI leadership bring together the entire Oxford Americanist community for 'American Ground', an hour of coffee, croissants, and conversation. The final American Ground of Michaelmas term, however, features the RAI Bake Off. While an impressively large and talented group of bakers set out their wares, I waited in my office, practising my best Paul Hollywood impression before having the honour of judging the contest. After a blind tasting of more than two dozen cakes, cookies, and pastries, I awarded special recognition for boldest flavours to Departmental Lecturer Dan Rowe's ale cake with malt cream, named three finalists, including Deputy Director Uta Balbier's Florentine biscuits and DPhil student Josh Lappen's chocolate gateau with lime-caramel sauce, before crowning the winner: Institute Manager Katy Long's Coconut-Passionfruit cake. Katy, I subsequently learned, had repeated as champion!

TOWERS AND TUTORIALS. The Harmsworth Professor's principal teaching responsibilities revolve around postgraduates—the Sources and Historiography seminar for MSt students, the weekly American History Graduate Seminar, and confirmation of status interviews for

doctoral candidates. I did get a small taste of undergraduate teaching by participating in one of Uta Balbier's tutorials, delivering four lectures in the US History series, and speaking to the undergraduate history societies at Queen's and Magdalen (the latter ending with a climb to the top of Magdalen tower). And, of course, preserving something of the old tradition of teachers and students living together, my Queen's College office shared a staircase with three other fellows and a dozen student rooms.

HARMSWORTH CENTENNIAL: The year climaxed in June with the Harmsworth centennial celebration. Nineteen occupants of the Harmsworth Chair reflected on its impact and legacy in a series of panel discussions and a gala dinner with remarks from the Provost of Queen's College, the Chancellor of the University, the Deputy US Ambassador to the UK, and Rhodes Professor Emeritus Richard Carwardine. What an honour it was to meet so many of the historians I most admire, and to join a distinguished line that includes both my undergraduate advisor and my graduate supervisor!

At the end of *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy learns that if she really wanted to find inspiration and friendship, she should not have looked further than her own backyard. My year in Oxford has confirmed that insular message to be plain wrong and I thank the RAI community for welcoming me. It has truly been the experience and the honour of a lifetime. ■

Bruce J. Schulman is William E. Huntington Professor of History at Boston University.

Examining American Presidential Power from Oxford

Frank Bowman

I first wrote about impeachment during the presidency of Bill Clinton. Soon after Donald Trump was elected president in 2016, it became obvious that impeachment might return to the centre of American political conversation. Most of the early chatter could be dismissed as expressions of disappointment by defeated Democrats confronted with an extremely unconventional chief executive. However, in reasonably short order, the possibility of a serious impeachment effort loomed larger. That prospect moved me to write a book: *High Crimes and Misdemeanors: A History of Impeachment for the Age of Trump* (CUP, 2019). My theme was that impeachment is a very old legislative tool, designed by the English Parliament in 1376 to counteract executive overreach, a tool that in its American manifestation is sufficiently flexible to deal with a corrupt, egregiously incompetent, or authoritarian president. Writing the book required that I learn about centuries of British constitutional history, and then try to figure out how much of that history influenced the framers of the American constitution as they designed the framework within which American presidents would operate.

The book was first published in August 2019, just before the revelations about President Trump's pressure on Ukraine that triggered his first impeachment and trial. The book and my other writings on the subject gave me an opportunity to participate in a modest way in the congressional process. But when Trump was acquitted in early 2020, I assumed that impeachment would no longer be a live topic in the immediate future. Accordingly, I turned my attention to a different concern—that the pardon power granted to the president by the US Constitution could be used to create a regime of impunity for a misbehaving president. President Trump had already employed the pardon power in controversial ways and suggested that he might do even more unprecedented things, possibly including pardoning himself. Therefore, for most of 2020, I researched the pardon power, producing a long law journal article and a number of shorter examinations of particular issues. Once again, I found myself deep in British law and constitutional history. Not only had the American framers plainly been influenced by British practice when they granted pardon authority to the president, but US courts have repeatedly declared that the pardon power of the American president is effectively coextensive

with that of the British monarch in 1788. Hence, figuring out what an American president can and cannot do today requires knowing what British kings and queens could and could not do in a time long past. Moreover, in both Great Britain and the United States, impeachment and pardons are inextricably linked. Pardoning was one of the great prerogative powers of the Crown, while impeachment was created to hedge royal power with some limits. The same is true of the American presidency. The linkage between power and limit is illustrated by the fact that, in both countries, fundamental law prohibits the pardoning of impeachments.

As it turned out, in 2021, Donald Trump would be impeached, and acquitted, a second time, pulling me back into the maelstrom of that process once again. It also required that I write a second edition of my impeachment book to include all the new material. But my exploration of pardoning in 2020 suggested an entirely new book, addressing the pardon power of the American president. To write such a book properly demands intimate familiarity with the development of British ideas about sovereignty, law, and clemency, as well as with the channels of education and information that flowed between Great Britain and her North American colonies-turned-independent-states.

Where better, I thought, to learn about these subjects than Oxford? I am immensely grateful to the RAI for hosting me as a Fellow-in-Residence in the spring of 2023. Here I have finished the second edition of my impeachment book, and gotten a terrific start on the pardon book. Oxford has matchless library and human resources for projects of this kind. More to the point for me personally, the RAI has been a welcoming home away from home where I have made new friends and been introduced to fantastic colleagues across the University. I particularly valued the opportunity to present a talk on the pardon work, at which I received numerous generous suggestions.

In one sense, my time in Oxford was a 'bucket list' adventure. But it has been so lovely that I hope time and fortune will permit me to bring the bucket back to the well some other time. ■

Frank O. Bowman III is University of Missouri Curators' Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Floyd R. Gibson Missouri Endowed Professor of Law Emeritus. He lives in Durango, Colorado.

Early-Career Impressions

Mark Power Smith

The RAI and Mansfield College have been model academic homes to me as a Junior Research Fellow over the last two years. I have divided my time here between three main tasks: assembling a funding proposal for a collaborative project with Adam Smith for a grant from the AHRC and Leverhulme Foundations; researching and writing a new article; and teaching. For the collaborative project, Adam and I decided to pitch a research proposal on 'Conservatism in the Atlantic World'. Our idea is to study how the term 'conservatism' was used across three regions (Latin America, the United States, and Britain) in the nineteenth century, in collaboration with Will Fowler, a historian of Mexico based at St Andrews. We aim to identify those people who called themselves 'conservative' and study the ideas and policies which were associated with the term. Our premises are that the concept emerged at roughly the same time (the 1830s) in each region and that it was used by a variety of actors to navigate a period of instability and crisis in the Atlantic world. Grant applications can be hard going, but the process has made me a much more precise and self-aware writer, a better collaborator (I hope!), and a more ambitious historian. If the proposals are accepted, I cannot wait to get started.

At the same time, I have greatly enjoyed writing an article, 'The Crisis of Household Government and the Rise of Democratic Conservatism before the Civil War'. This looks at two high-profile legal cases, in which Edwin Forrest and Daniel Sickles—political figures associated with the Democratic Party—took revenge on their errant wives' lovers. I investigate how these cases were politicised during the 1850s. Democratic newspapers blamed the women's movement, among other radical groups, for the scandals and defended Forrest and Sickles for resorting to violence. Editors sensationalised the incidents to encourage Northern Democrats to take a stand against radical groups in alliance with their Southern brethren. The reasoning was that

Northern households would also be destroyed if abolitionists and their allies were to triumph. Although this effort at national consolidation was ultimately unsuccessful, I argue that appeals to physical violence as a means of protecting patriarchal households became associated with a novel form of 'conservatism' in Democratic political culture during this period. In addition to this piece, I have begun a new project examining American responses to the closing decades of the Age of Revolutions from 1865 to 1877.



Homicide of P. Barton Key by Hon. Daniel E. Sickles, *Harper's Weekly*, 12 March 1859 (Library of Congress)

Teaching at Oxford has been a novel and immensely rewarding experience. The tutorial format allowed me to get to know the students and track the development of their ideas each week. Giving lectures was fun and enriching. I have been invited to speak not just on general topics in US history but also to craft imaginative talks on my own specialisms. Most of all, I have enjoyed co-teaching the Special

Subject on 'Slavery, Emancipation and the Crisis of the Union'. This has allowed me to dive into the primary sources with some extremely able students, some of whom amazed me with the historiographical knowledge they acquired every week. A highlight of the past academic year was the launch of my first monograph, *Young America*, with some of these students in attendance. Having completed my MSt in US History at Oxford in 2014, it was satisfying to see my book join Oxford faculty and alumni in the hallowed cabinets of the RAI's Seminar Room 2.

But, all this apart, the true genius of the RAI and its nonconformist neighbour, Mansfield College, has been in the people. Whether discussing whom we would have voted for in various nineteenth-century elections in the Kings Arms, or enjoying a celebratory dinner with History finalists in Mansfield's glorious chapel, these are the memories that have made the whole experience inherently worthwhile. ■

Mark Power Smith was Junior Research Fellow in Nineteenth-Century US History at the RAI and Mansfield College, 2021–23.

The Early Harmsworth Professors

Michael Hopkins

On 1 June 1922, Samuel Eliot Morison of Harvard University delivered his inaugural lecture as the first holder of the Harold Vyvyan Harmsworth Professorship of American History at the University of Oxford. Its origins lay in the tragic circumstances of war. The prominent press lord, Harold Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Rothermere, lost two sons in the First World War. Vere Harmsworth, who was due to go up to Trinity College, Cambridge in Michaelmas term 1914, died at Ancre on the Somme in November 1916, aged 21, whilst serving with the Royal Naval Division. Harold Vyvyan Harmsworth, who was an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford in 1913–14, joined the Irish Guards and won the MC. Wounded several times, he died of his wounds in February 1918 aged 23. Their father created two university chairs in their honour.

In November 1918, Rothermere offered the University of Cambridge an endowment of £20,000 for a chair to be named the Vere Harmsworth Professorship of Naval History. Cambridge rapidly accepted the offer and in June 1919 appointed John Holland Rose. In March 1920, Rothermere offered the University of Oxford £20,000 to endow a Harold Vyvyan Harmsworth Professorship of American History. By October 1920, the University had enacted a statute creating the new post, but it was not until May 1922 that Morison assumed the chair.

Rothermere clearly wished to honour his son, but he saw the chair playing a larger role. He shared the perspective of his brother, Lord Northcliffe, who had been head of the British Mission to the United States during the war, and who saw the Americans as crucial to future global stability and wanted to promote better understanding between the two countries at a time when anti-British feelings were prominent.

The Harmsworth Professorship now operates as a visiting post for one academic year. But the original statute stipulated appointment for ten years with possible renewal for a further ten years. This proved difficult to implement. Morison held the post for three years, 1922–25. His successor, Robert McNutt McElroy of Princeton University, was professor for 14 years, 1925–39. But it was not possible thereafter to appoint someone for such long terms in office. The statute was altered in 1938 to allow appointments of one to five years but, despite regular attempts to secure two-year appointments, no one was elected for more than one year.

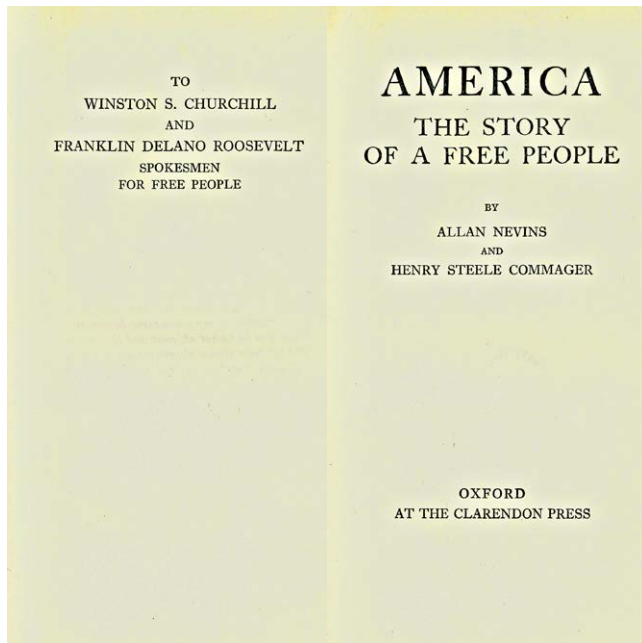


Harold Sidney Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Rothermere (1868–1940), c. 1910–1915 (Library of Congress)

The Second World War posed considerable obstacles to appointments. Thomas Jefferson Wertebaker of Princeton University was appointed for 1939–40 but was unable to come to Oxford because of State Department travel restrictions. He eventually took up the post in 1944–45. Although the chair was vacant for 1941–42, 1943–44 and 1945–46, Oxford did secure the appointment of Allan Nevins for 1940–41, who, alongside Morison, played a vital role in developing American history at the University.

Morison was a vigorous, active presence during his three years. He created a special subject, 'The American Revolution and the Formation of the Federal Constitution, 1760–1788' and published a book of documents that students could use. He also published a two-volume history of the United States shortly after leaving his post. He judged Oxford's libraries "hopelessly un-coordinated and so decentralized that it requires years to learn what books on one's own subject may be found there". In response, he established an American History Library in the Examination Schools, helping to raise some of the funds.

Nevins was even more influential, which is especially impressive since difficulties with British and American officials delayed his arrival and he only held the chair in January–June 1941.



Dedication and title page of Allan Nevins and Henry Steele Commager, *America: The Story of a Free People* (Oxford, 1942)



Samuel Eliot Morison (1887–1976) c. 1952 (NH 47774, courtesy of the Naval History & Heritage Command)

He proposed a new special subject, ‘Slavery and Secession in the United States, January 1854–January 1863’, attracting the interest of a succession of Oxford tutors. As H. G. Nicholas of New College observed, Nevins’ reform “proved singularly fruitful and far-reaching...it took quick root, flourished, and still flourishes”. Max Beloff of Nuffield College also endorsed it, noting that it “offered what undoubtedly appeals to the young when they embark seriously upon history: a distinctive set of moral problems”.

Nevins also played an important role in promoting Anglo-American understanding. Recruited by the Ministry of Information, he gave propaganda talks around the country. He spoke of how the United States would soon join the British and bring their great resources to their fight, even though he had no basis for such claims. Nevins observed, “that seemed to me a much more useful employment in wartime than mere teaching to slender audiences”. A number of his talks were published in *This Is England* before the end of the year. He also published, with Henry Steele Commager, *America: The Story of a Free People* in 1942.

In the immediate postwar years, changes were made to improve appointment procedures. The statute for the chair gave a prominent role to the US Ambassador in obtaining suitable candidates, and this sometimes caused delays. In 1947–48 Oxford created an ad hoc American committee, chaired by Morison, which would suggest names. In 1953–54 they made arrangements with the American Historical Association, which established a special committee to identify and assess potential candidates. There was

never another vacancy after 1946, though some appointments were only secured at the last moment. But electors faced two controversies before they established a more stable process.

In July 1954 *The Reporter* suggested that US Ambassador Winthrop W. Aldrich had blocked the appointment of the liberal historian, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr of Harvard University. Such was the disquiet, despite flaws in the magazine’s account, that the cultural affairs officer thereafter deputised for the ambassador on the electoral board.

Three years later, the Oxford electors listed John Hope Franklin, the first African American candidate for the post. But his candidacy became tangled in the AHA committee’s sensitivities about its role in appointments. The committee had submitted names to Oxford, whose electors had added Kenneth Stamp and Franklin for consideration. Clearly angry about this, the AHA committee met and unanimously backed their original nominee, David Donald, and, astonishingly, a majority refused to approve either Franklin or Stamp as suitable. Keen to smooth relations with the AHA, Oxford appointed Donald.

However, the troubles of the 1950s gave way to optimism in the 1960s. The study of American history flourished in Oxford and beyond, assisted not least by the return of Allan Nevins who returned as Harmsworth Professor in 1964–65. ■

Michael F. Hopkins is Reader in American Foreign Policy at the University of Liverpool. He is currently working on the history of the Harmsworth Chair.

100 Years of American History at Oxford *Adam Smith*

When Samuel Eliot Morison, a young naval historian from Harvard, came to Oxford as the first Harmsworth Professor of American History in 1922, his post represented a stunning innovation. Little post-Roman history was taught at the University except that of England and, in a somewhat desultory way, the Empire. Much has changed since then, and the Harmsworth Chair has had a profound influence on the study of America in this university and beyond.

This Trinity term at the RAI, we celebrated the chair's centennial (strictly speaking, its 101st anniversary, as Covid delayed our plans) with a conference and dinner attended by most living Harmsworth Professors. The first day focused on the history of the Harmsworth Chair itself, while the second saw participants explore two key themes to which Harmsworth Professors have returned over the years. The first was the question, who is an American: what have been the changing boundaries of belonging and citizenship, and how have these been contested? A panel consisting of Annette Gordon-Reed, Lizabeth Cohen, Barbara Savage, and Robin Kelley reflected on the urgency of historicising questions that roil contemporary US society. The other key theme in the past hundred years of Harmsworth Lectures has been the place of the United States in the world. Perhaps in part because of the external perspective afforded by a position in Oxford, Harmsworth Professors have often taken the opportunity to reflect on their country in comparative, transnational, and global terms. A panel comprising Kristin Hoganson, David Hollinger, Melvyn Leffler, and Ian Tyrrell considered the changing assumptions and methodologies embedded in these lectures, reflecting on how present and future scholars will approach America and the world.

It was a stimulating conference, as it could hardly fail to be, given the calibre of the speakers. It left me pondering, not for the first time, the perils and privileges of studying America from the outside in. For most of the

last century, the rationale for studying American history in Oxford, beyond the intrinsic interest of the subject (which, it has to be confessed, was not always self-evident to Oxonians), arose from the geostrategic relationship between Britain and the United States. In the 1920s, it was in Britain's national interest to forge a closer relationship with the United States, the new global powerhouse. Having bankrolled the British (and French) war effort, the US became, for the first time, a creditor rather than a debtor nation, and there was palpable anxiety among

the London political elite that British power would inevitably wane without support from US military, political, and cultural capital.

Around the time that Viscount Rothermere was endowing the Harmsworth Chair, Sulgrave Manor, the ancestral home of the Washington family, was opened as a shrine to the Anglo-American relationship, and statues of Abraham Lincoln were unveiled in Manchester and in London's Parliament Square. At the ceremony in front of the Houses of Parliament, Prime Minister David Lloyd George turned to a member of the American delegation and said of Lincoln, "he is ours, sir,

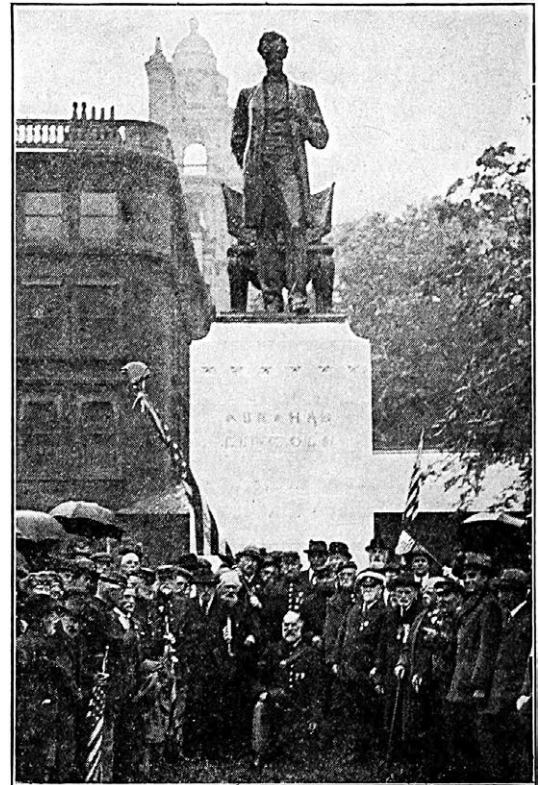
almost as much as he is yours!" (Lloyd George felt a deep personal connection to the President who had grown up in rural obscurity, risen to the highest office in the land, and shown that muscular military leadership was sometimes necessary to defend liberal constitutionalism.) The intention of these efforts was to stress the deep, imagined cultural and racial affinity across the ocean. From the British point of view, the US was being reincorporated into a British, or at least Anglo-American world.

Twenty years later, the Second World War and then the Cold War changed the context again. By then, the US was clearly the dominant global power, and the US State Department saw the Harmsworth Professors of the 1940s and '50s as assets in their efforts at cultural diplomacy, consolidating the core Western liberal democratic alliance against totalitarian



enemies. In those years, American Studies grew in the UK. It even grew in a modest way at Oxford. The answer to the question why one should study America from the outside in was, at its most straightforward, that the US was the leader of the free world. Western Europe's freedoms depended on American strength and American ideals. Britain, in particular, shared a language and a common set of liberal values with the United States. By studying America, we were also, in a sense, coming to a deeper understanding of the shared basis of Western democracy, with all its flaws and its virtues.

The fall of the Berlin Wall collapsed some of those assumptions, even if not all and not immediately. The RAI was conceived in the 1990s and opened by President Clinton just weeks before 9/11, in a decade when some people talked about the end of history, western neoliberals advised the Russian government on the need to sell state assets, and historians wrote modish books about globalisation and the end of the nation-state—not all of which have aged well. What, in such a world, was the rationale for studying the United States at Oxford? Whereas the answer had for the most part lain far beyond Oxford between 1922 and 1989, it moved closer to home from the 1990s, with a recognition of the need for Oxford to globalise its curriculum and the emergence of a transnational turn in historical scholarship.



The statue of Abraham Lincoln in Parliament Square at its unveiling in 1920 (Wikimedia Commons)



President Clinton opens the RAI in 2001 (Rob Judges)

All this still applies today. US history at Oxford is embedded in a large faculty with global expertise, so graduate students and staff based here naturally think in transnational and comparative terms. And, of course, while the US may be declining in relative terms, it will remain a world power that needs to be understood because it is unavoidable. But I would argue that there is now a further reason to study America systematically: that the US experience has so penetrated Anglophone culture and politics that it often becomes difficult to distinguish between what is distinctive about the US and what is not. Social media and Netflix have made US news our news, US memes our memes. And because the struggles of a polarised American political world are so compelling in their urgency, they can seem, even to non-Americans, to represent universal struggles. In such a setting, one possible role for scholars looking at the US from the outside might be, in effect, to cut it down to size, and point out divergences as well as exploring connections and commonalities. By definition, studying America from beyond its borders affords us a different perspective. Not necessarily a more advantageous perspective, but most certainly a different one. That is something we should cherish. ■

First-Year Reflections

Emily Brady

As a historian of photography, I am always intrigued by what images are selected to illustrate moments of historical significance. For my first year as Broadbent Junior Research Fellow at the RAI, I wondered what image I would choose to form the historical memory of 2022–23. The gathering of Harmsworth Professors in Trinity term? The end-of-term cornhole tournament? Or the RAI's resident fox lying on the lawn? All these images feed into the whole but do not quite capture the essence of what it means to be part of the RAI community.

This year at the RAI has been unlike anything I have experienced before. As someone new to Oxford, I had visions of ivory towers, windswept robes, and overflowing glasses of port. In fact, what I have experienced at the RAI has been an environment so welcoming that I feel as though I have been here for years. Adam Smith and Uta Balbier have created a wonderful community of robust scholarship and intellectual exchange (often in the informal setting of the weekly coffee morning). My early-career colleagues—Mark Power Smith, Grace Mallon, and Dan Rowe—have been invaluable in making me feel welcome. And the staff at the RAI—Katy Long, Hannah Greiving, and Richard Purkiss—have made this year a tremendous success.

Perhaps the most remarkable experience of this year has been travelling to New Mexico to meet photographer Maria Varela. An activist and educator who worked with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in the 1960s, Varela is a historical figure I have long been inspired by. She was one of five women on whom I wrote my undergraduate dissertation, and so I have gone from writing about her photographs to posing alongside her in one. The chance to meet Varela in person, conduct an oral history, and discuss future collaborations

has been a great privilege, and one I would never have imagined a year ago.

Partly inspired by this trip, I have been thinking more and more about the role of the visual. As a cultural historian of race and gender, I have enjoyed the interdisciplinary nature of the RAI and sought additional connections in the Department of History of Art. This has included organising a special seminar on 'Black Matrilineage and Photography,' participating in a symposium on 'Mimicry,' and lecturing in an Art History survey course.

Trying to encourage students to think in interdisciplinary terms, informed by cultural history, has been one of the highlights of my year. I have supervised final year projects on children's history, film, and oral history, and have also contributed to the Stanford House exchange programme, tutoring two students in comparative British and American History 1970–2000. Helping American students adjust to Oxford as a relative newcomer presented a challenge, but seeing them flourish in tutorials has been a wonderful introduction to the Oxford teaching system.

What does the next academic year hold? I am hoping to complete and submit my book proposal: *A History of Black Women Photographers in the Civil Rights Movement*. I am looking forward to collaborating with Dr Grace Mallon in convening the weekly American History Research Seminar. I hope to curate an exhibition of Maria Varela's photography at St John's college in Trinity term 2024. And, most importantly, I plan to win either the RAI Bake Off or a cornhole tournament. And when that day comes, I intend to photograph it. ■

Emily Brady holds the Broadbent Junior Research Fellowship in American History at the RAI and Christ Church.



Constitutional Exchanges

Grace Mallon

The partnership between the Rothermere American Institute and the Kinder Institute for Constitutional Democracy at the University of Missouri has deep roots. Kinder Director Jay Sexton is himself a former Director of the RAI and, after many years of studying and teaching here in Oxford, likely the only Kansan alive to routinely use the word 'bloody' as an intensifier.

One outcome of the Oxford-Missouri relationship has been the creation of the Kinder Junior Research Fellowship in Atlantic History, which I am fortunate currently to hold. As a historian of constitutionalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the opportunity to live and work in Oxford while forging an ongoing relationship with fellow constitutional scholars at Missouri has already proved fruitful.

In January 2023, I travelled for the first time to Columbia, Missouri to visit Kinder's home in the magnificent Jesse Hall, check out Thomas Jefferson's original tombstone, which now lives steps from Kinder's front door, and give a paper at the lively Friday Colloquium Series, where I fielded thought-provoking questions about my book project on early US federalism from faculty, students, and friends of the Institute. Back in Oxford, I presented remotely for the Kinder Forum, Kinder's public-facing online seminar series, and met up with a group of Missouri undergraduates studying abroad during the Easter Vacation. We convened at the RAI for an in-depth discussion about Indigenous peoples of the south-eastern United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Perhaps the most important part of my job is to help organise and teach the annual summer study abroad programme for the Kinder Institute's MA in Atlantic History and Politics. In July 2022, I spent a month leading the students through key books and issues in the history of the British Atlantic world 1600-1800. Studying

this period opens up big questions about the enslavement and expropriation of Indigenous people and people of African descent, the political and economic functioning of the British Empire, and the ideas underlying the Age of Revolutions. In considering these questions, we were able to explore the experiences of the different peoples who travelled the North Atlantic, lived along its shores, and felt the impact of its interconnections, from European sailors, slave traders, and colonists, to enslaved and free Black people in urban and rural spaces, to the Indigenous people who not only encountered colonists in North America but also travelled the Atlantic world themselves.

Each instructor on the summer school enjoys the challenge of taking the students out one Friday for an Atlantic-themed field trip. On my Friday, we visited eighteenth-century London, starting with a tour of Samuel Johnson's house in Gough Square and lunch at Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese, where Johnson's Club often met to eat and drink. (One brave student eschewed the pub in favour of St Paul's Cathedral.) In the afternoon, Sir Ernest Ryder KC joined us for a look around the Inns of Court, where many American lawyers have studied, and where many of the principles of the common law, which our two nations share, were fostered and developed.

In July 2023, our summer school adventures resumed with a 4th of July party at the RAI, a field trip to Blenheim Palace, and a new group of students from all around the Atlantic world setting off on their MA journeys. The opportunity to interact with these up-and-coming scholars makes me even more excited to play my part in building the rewarding relationship between Kinder and the RAI over the next two years. ■

Grace Mallon holds the Kinder Junior Research Fellowship in Atlantic History at the RAI and University College.





Travel Grants

Josh Lappen

In August 2022, I completed a trip to the California State Archives in Sacramento, where I examined the records of the California Railroad Commission (now the California Public Utilities Commission) and the official papers of Governor Earl Warren. Both collections proved extremely useful, yielding both surprising revelations and new perspectives on familiar topics.

Within the records of the Commission, I reviewed applications, depositions, maps, and judgments in a variety of administrative proceedings. The maps and depositions in particular offered new insights into the nature of electric development in Southern California between 1911 and 1935. Much to my surprise, the depositions gave good views of the personalities of several prominent actors. Mixed in with the technical answers, I encountered jokes, complaints, irritability, and personal grudges which will enable me to round out these figures in my writing. R. H. Ballard was both a grouch and an ideologue; W. C. Mullendore and W. B. Mathews were dry wits who enjoyed the daily grunt work of lawyering; George Hoxie was cheerful but a brown-noser.

Earl Warren's gubernatorial papers gave me a valuable new perspective on the violent 1953 Southern California Edison strike, which at the time was the longest utility strike in American history. I found previously unexamined law enforcement documents detailing the state's struggle to determine an appropriate response to a campaign of sabotage by striking linemen, which culminated in the demolition of a major transmission line using stolen dynamite. The strike eventually ended in near-total defeat, which was documented in notes by the company's virulently anti-union president and disturbed state officials. Although the Earl Warren collection's files on the strike were limited in volume, they offered diverse perspectives, critical voices, and otherwise-unreported facts.

I also spent some time scoping out additional collections within the archive in preparation for a future visit. The records of the California Air Resources Board and the official papers of Governor Pat Brown both look very promising, and I hope to return to the archive next summer to examine these papers, and to continue working on the voluminous California Railroad Commission records.

Thanks to the generous hospitality of a friend in Davis, I was able to cancel my hotel reservation in Sacramento, instead commuting daily by train between Davis and Old Town Sacramento. This decreased the cost of the trip and allowed me to divert some funding towards attending the Western Historical Association's conference in San Antonio, Texas in October. The last-minute decision to attend this conference made a major difference in my work, and connected directly with my research at the California State Archive. My recent work there sparked productive discussions with professors and graduate students based at UC Davis and CSU Sacramento, and I hope to collaborate with at least one of them on a conference paper next year. The chance to talk with other academics examining greater Los Angeles politics, energy resource development, and racial placemaking in the American West has substantially improved my project, and I look forward to working many of these conversations into my dissertation.

This trip to Sacramento enabled me to extend my analysis of labour politics into the second half of my doctoral dissertation, and to portray some of its main actors as full human beings with characters of their own. I am deeply grateful to the RAI's benefactors for their support. ■



Earl Warren (1891–1974) as Governor of California (Library of Congress)



Katie Fapp

With the help of a travel award from the RAI, I have been able to visit some of the most important archives in the United States to access much-needed resources for my doctoral thesis, “‘To Clasp Hands...Across the Ocean’: American Woman Suffragists in the Pacific World, 1893–c.1928’. Over the summer of 2022, I made my way up the eastern seaboard as I visited and worked in the Library of Congress, Columbia University’s Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and the Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute for Advance Study, Harvard University.

After attending the 2022 conference of the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations, I headed to Washington for two weeks to work in the Library of Congress’s manuscript reading room with the papers of Maud Wood Park and the League of Women Voters (LWV). Both Park and the LWV, of which she was the first president, are primary actors in my thesis. Park’s 1909–10 world tour is the subject of chapter 2, and her work with the LWV in the 1920s Pacific forms the focus of my final chapter. Exploring and working with these papers first-hand was fascinating. As I peeled back the layers of Park’s public persona, I was able to trace the trajectory of her thoughts and feelings while on tour. This included her convictions on the rights of women

and the place of America in their development around the world, but also more stirring personal dramas such as a secret marriage. I even had the opportunity to work in the world-famous main reading room in search of a source that had eluded me for several months (and thanks to the helpful librarians there, I was finally able to get my hands on it).

At Columbia, I consulted the papers of the Institute of Pacific Relations to search for information relating to their involvement with the LWV and the formation of international women’s groups in the region. For the last two weeks of my trip, I took the train up to Cambridge to work in the Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute of Harvard University. There, I continued to work with Park’s papers as well as those of other suffrage campaigners. As this was my first time in the Boston area, it was particularly stimulating to be in the same city and work in the same buildings in which I knew many of my protagonists had worked. In fact, Park herself was an alumna of Radcliffe and helped to establish the library. This made it a fitting end to the trip. One goal of my doctoral research is to further our understanding of her and other suffragists’ work; I have the generosity of the RAI and its donors to thank for helping me achieve this. ■



Headquarters of the League of Women Voters, Washington, DC, 1920s (Library of Congress)



Maud Wood Park, 1924 (Library of Congress)

The Alain Locke Collection

Bethan Davies

Alain Locke was selected as one of Pennsylvania's two Rhodes Scholars in 1907. In some ways he was entirely typical of the elite men who won that prestigious award: he was an academic high-flyer from a middle-class background, a Harvard graduate and winner of multiple prizes. Yet in one important way he was entirely untypical: Locke was African American. Rhodes Scholars from Southern states demanded his award be retracted. The Rhodes Trust did not back down, although they did not select another African American Rhodes scholar until 1963. Locke led an astonishingly full life of academic and creative achievement, and is perhaps best known for the anthology, *The New Negro* (1925). As a Black gay man, Locke led a life that transgressed and pushed beyond the boundaries that others tried to impose upon him.

It seemed fitting, then, that when the Vere Harmsworth Library and RAI decided to create a new collection of material focused on African American history and culture, we should name it after Alain Locke. With support from the Association of American Rhodes Scholars, the collection aims to expand the Vere Harmsworth Library's holdings in the areas of African American history, politics, biography and culture, as well as filling gaps in older materials.

The establishment of the Alain Locke Collection will allow the VHL to expand the purchase of African US-focused research monographs without affecting expenditure on other areas. It will build on the VHL's current holdings and run alongside the continued intake of publications via legal deposit agreements and e-book subscriptions. The Collection will be housed in a dedicated space on the ground floor of the library, making it one of the first things that readers will see as they enter. Displays and exhibition materials may also be set up as the collection expands.

Looking to the future, we have identified further areas of development:

- Create a post to work with and promote the Alain Locke Collection, providing an entry-level role for an individual looking to pursue a career in academic libraries.
- Develop the Alain Locke Collection as a key resource for supporting research in African American studies, enhancing diversity within the Bodleian Libraries' collections, and building links with current BME students and researchers.
- Expand our (and the wider Bodleian Libraries') database provision for African American history, politics, and culture. A top 10 'wish list' of resources has been identified, including *History Vault* NAACP papers and *Race Relations in America*. These would provide access to essential but often inaccessible resources.
 - Create an online guide to the Alain Locke Collection for researchers and students.



Alain Locke by Winold Reiss (reproduced from *The New Negro: An Interpretation* (New York, 1925) via Wikimedia Commons)

The Alain Locke Collection contributes to the RAI and VHL's ambition to make Oxford the best place outside the United States to study African American history and culture. The intellectual rationale for building our collections in this way rests in a conviction that the long history of slavery and colonialism, as well as that of abolitionism and movements for racial equality, needs to be understood in a transatlantic context. Locke's cosmopolitan life, in Harlem, Oxford, and Berlin, echoed that of other Black figures in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Establishing a major collection of African American history resources at a leading university outside the United States will help those who study them to maintain a similar breadth of perspective. ■

For more information on the Alain Locke Collection, a list of titles selected for its first round of acquisitions, please visit <http://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/vhl/>. To find out more on how to support the Collection and the Vere Harmsworth Library, please contact Jenny Haines at jenny.haines@devoff.ox.ac.uk.

Support the RAI

Katy Long

The RAI is unique among social science and humanities research institutes in the UK in that it is almost entirely funded by private philanthropy. Its creation was made possible by generous donations from the Rothermere Foundation and the Rhodes Trust. In the past five years, the RAI has benefited from donations that have supported a three-year postdoctoral research fellowship; the endowed Broadbent Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in American History; and the endowed Edward Orsborn Professorship in US Politics and Political History. These donations, alongside others to the academic programme fund and the travel awards scheme, have enabled outstanding research on the United States across the humanities and social sciences, training the next generation of scholars and enhancing Oxford's position as a centre of US studies in Britain. Indeed, none of the activities described in this annual report would have been possible without donations. This year, we have been able to run a packed programme of seminars and lectures, offer 18 travel awards to undergraduate and postgraduate students, provide five writing-up scholarships for final-year doctoral students, fund two events conceived by students and researchers, create a fixed-term teaching position for an early-career academic for 2023–24, and sponsor two postgraduate and early-career conferences held at the RAI.



The RAI is housed in its own beautiful and unique building, which allows us to provide offices and social spaces for our lively postgraduate community, offer teaching rooms for undergraduate and master's courses, and host an expansive programme of events. Establishing these facilities and the Vere Harmsworth Library under a single roof has produced a vibrant, interdisciplinary hub for US studies. It costs around £300,000 per year to keep the RAI open at a basic level, which includes premises running costs and support staff salaries. An endowment of £2 million in support of the RAI's operational and academic

programme-related costs would secure the long-term future of the Institute. However, any donation towards the running of the RAI makes a difference by enabling us to concentrate on our core mission—to enable outstanding researchers to promote the scholarly and public understanding of the United States.

We particularly welcome donations targeted at the following areas:

TRAVEL AND RESEARCH FUNDS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS AND OTHER OXFORD-BASED SCHOLARS. Each year we spend up to £15,000 on direct support for research, but even so we have to turn down outstanding applicants. A gift of £2,500 would represent full funding for a typical research trip to the US by one of our graduate students.

SUPPORT FOR EARLY-CAREER ACADEMICS. A gift of £60,000 would enable us to pay the full cost of employing a postdoctoral researcher for one year. We currently have three postdoctoral fellows, all of whom have recently completed their PhDs and are expanding their publication records and teaching experience. Former postdoctoral researchers at the RAI have gone on to permanent academic jobs at universities in the UK and beyond. A gift of £1,000,000 would enable us to endow a postdoctoral position permanently. One of our postdoctoral fellows is currently funded from an endowment, thanks to the generosity of William and Camille Broadbent. ■

If you would like to support the RAI, please donate using the links on this page: <https://www.rai.ox.ac.uk/giving>.

If you are a US citizen and would like to speak about making a gift through Americans for Oxford (501c3), please contact Conor Cicione at ccicione@oxfordna.org.

If you would like to discuss supporting a particular aspect of the RAI's activities, please contact the Director, Adam Smith at adam.smith@rai.ox.ac.uk.

The Vere Harmsworth Library in 2022–23

Bethan Davies

The VHL is on the cusp of several changes and innovations, many of which should(!) be in place by the time you read this report.

When our lovely colleagues from the Radcliffe Science Library move out in September 2023, the VHL will be returning to its pre-RSL opening hours. This means we will be open until 7pm on weekdays during term-time and the Easter and Christmas Vacations, and until 5pm during the Long Vacation. Weekend opening will be confined to term-time only. Further details are available on our website, and all announcements will be publicised on our blog and social media.

Another important change, less visible to readers, will be the Bodleian Libraries' collective move to a new library management system. But the VHL is taking this opportunity to introduce a new, simpler lending policy. Our loanable titles will be available to all University staff and students, making our collection more accessible to the wider academic community. Loanable books on the open shelves at the VHL may go out for up to 7 days (up from our current 2) and will renew automatically every 7 days thereafter up to 112 days (unless the reader's University membership expires or another reader requests the title). The status of non-loanable materials, such as historical works held in the closed stack, will not change.

You can find further information on changes to lending policies across the Bodleian Libraries on the Bodleian website (<https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/services/borrow/policy>). And, of course, do email me if you have any questions. My advice? Get into the habit of putting in a book request for any title you need which is out on loan, which will stop the automatic renewal process and bring the book back for you to use!

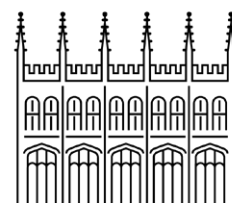
Turning to resources, the VHL has now secured access to the database *Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600–2000*, which seeks to make the materials of women's history accessible to scholars and students. Its extensive collection of primary sources

comprises historical works by women in the US suffrage movement, including the writings of black women suffragists, official publications of the League of Women's Voters and National Women's Party, papers of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and more.

The VHL has received an important donation of materials from the Association of American Rhodes Scholars towards the newly founded Alain Locke Collection (see p. 18 to find out more). This is alongside the AARS's continuing donations to the Aydelotte-Kieffer-Smith (AKS) Collection. We would like to record our thanks to the AARS for their continued, generous support of the VHL, and to all who have donated books and materials to the VHL over the past year.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome María Fernández Ramírez to the VHL. María joined us as Library Assistant in June and has been a wonderful addition to the team. Please feel free to say hello to her at the enquiry desk! ■

For the most recent updates on accessing the VHL and other Bodleian libraries, please visit <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/service-updates>. You can find more information on the VHL on the RAI website at www.rai.ox.ac.uk/vhl and our own site at <http://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.



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