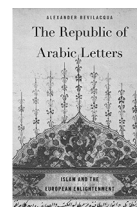


*Updates from and about
former H-C scholars*



Jennifer Linden (Emmanuel 1991)

My experience as Lionel de Jersey Harvard Scholar was obviously transformative as I ended up (much later) marrying a British colleague from graduate school and moving to London, where we are both academic faculty at University College London (UCL). We have a 14-year-old son, Adrian, who has spent most of his life in London – ergo I am routinely teased about my American accent at my own dinner table. My news this year is that I was promoted to Professor of Neuroscience at UCL. I'd be delighted to hear from friends at the Harvard-Cambridge Scholarships who are passing through London; please feel free to contact me at j.linden@ucl.ac.uk.

*We invite you to share
your updates with the
H-C community!*

Please e-mail
hcscholarship@gmail.com
with news for next year's
newsletter.

Alexander Bevilacqua (Trinity 2007)

I am delighted to share news of my forthcoming book, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment*, which will appear with the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. *The Republic of Arabic Letters*, which won the Thomas J. Wilson prize, HUP's prize for best first book, reconstructs the origins of the modern Western understanding of Islam. It draws on my archival research in six languages and as many countries.



Harvard-Cambridge

Spring 2018

hcscholarships@gmail.com

Scholarships

2017-2018 H-C Scholars Report from Cambridge

Ducks & Far-off Waddles

Emmanuel College certainly lives up to all the hype for **Halah Ahmad**, Lionel de Jersey Harvard Scholar. Indeed, it has felt nothing short of providential that her five sisters always referred to her as a duck, and she finally became one – an Emma “duck”! The people (and ducks, in fact) of Emma are incredibly friendly, gracing her room for the many concoctions of tea and coffee she can offer. (NB: The ducks mostly eat yellow flowers, not tea.) Halah now makes great

Thai bubble tea, chai, gingerbread lattes, and Arabic coffee – as she hopes the other H-C scholars can attest!

Overwhelmed by Fresher's fair, Halah eagerly signed up for ultimate Frisbee, rugby, judo, hockey, and polo – just to give them a try. Trying polo (yes, on horses) for the first time was an absolute thrill, as was her first Emma ceilidh and singing “The Circle of Life” with the Emma Chorus. While rugby, Frisbee, polo, and the rest did not stick, Halah has

returned to oil her rusty tennis skills in preparation for the lawn tennis courts Emma sets up come spring.

Halah has also been glad to make time to travel with new and old friends. In her first month, she joined an extremely exhausting charity hike up Mt. Snowdon in Wales, with tunes from *Lord of the Rings* ringing in her ears as she gazed upon the Welsh countryside. Destroyed sneakers and other clothing aside, it was one of the most beautiful places she had ever seen! During the Christmas Market season, it was off to Bath, where Halah saw the whole city from the rooftop of Bath Abbey and thought of her long-time inspiration, Jane Austen. She also made it to Barcelona, practicing the beginner's Spanish she's been taking for fun, and feasting her eyes on Antoni Gaudí's gorgeous work. She even hopped over to Egypt to see Cairo and the Pyramids for the first time, and to Jordan, to see her grandpa and record his stories from the Palestinian diaspora. The travel has provided overwhelming inspiration for Halah to make more time for her own art.

Meanwhile, Halah has also been consumed by side projects. She has started to draw a Palestine coloring book, made a chandelier to replace the drab lampshade hanging from her ceiling, and begun to put up more framed images of minorities and women (it's really about time!) on the walls of Harvard Room.

Halah just wishes she had a bit more time for all that Cambridge has to offer. Her program is sending her to Berlin for all of Easter break to work for the International Rescue Committee on refugee integration – a project she finds both exciting and daunting. Her program in Public Policy was exactly what she was looking for: full of international examples and comparisons, more statistics and economics than she has ever seen before (that's good and bad), plus a fair bit of moral philosophy through it all. Other highlights have included meeting many notable people, including the former candidate for UN Secretary General, Helen Clark, as well as Lord Chris Smith, the first openly-gay MP, and Lord Richard Wilson, the past master of Emmanuel College.

Friendship, Scholarship, and “Tasting the World”

Eesha Khare, Lt. Charles H. Fiske III Scholar, describes her Cambridge experience in three parts. First, there's her Trinity College Community. Eesha especially remembers her friends shouting “surprise!” when she opened her door to find them crowded in the small hallway outside on the bright and early morning of her birthday. Holding a lovely cake in their hands, her friends had caught her in her

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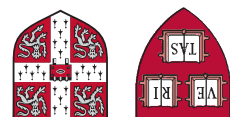
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c/o Harvard Alumni Association
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Cambridge, MA 02138



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2017-2018 H-C Scholars Report from Cambridge

continued from front cover

pajamas, “absolutely shocked by their caring and loving surprise.” This experience has not been singular – in the course of a few months at Cambridge, Eesha’s had the opportunity to build many strong friendships. Her Trinity College community has been especially central to her Cambridge experience. They enjoy pre-pre-drinks in Eesha’s Angel Court room (her house of seven graduate students in the central part of Trinity’s campus is affectionately self-termed the “AngelZ”), official pre-drinks in the Old Combination Room surrounded by beautiful portraits, themed BA formal dinners, post-drinks in their café-like bar, and dance parties every Friday. These bonding experiences aren’t limited to Friday night graduate formals – Eesha has learned how to play Avalon (where she’s not at all good at hiding her expressions if she’s bad), taught Bollywood dance lessons at Indian dance parties and ceilidhs (where she definitely doesn’t contain her expressions), helped cook community dinners, and hosted several late-night tea conversations in her room (now informally known as the “Trinity First Year Common Room”). In short, she is really appreciative of her Trinity Community.

Another central part of Eesha’s Cambridge experience is the chance to connect history, philosophy, and science. In 1959, British scientist and novelist C.P. Snow delivered his historic lecture, “The Two Cultures”, about how the division between science and humanities is a major hindrance to solving world problems today. This lecture, delivered at the Senate House in Cambridge, a building that Eesha passes every day on her way to class, well characterizes her academic experience at Cambridge. This year, she is pursuing an MPhil in History and Philosophy of Science. Trained as an engineer and chemist in undergrad, she has found it academically challenging and also rewarding to expand her thinking and engage substantively with this new field. Helped by supportive mentors among the Cambridge faculty, Eesha has been conducting thought experiments and archival research on the philosophy of objectivity in the sciences and the role of lichen in late 20th century British climate debates. She hopes to use this year to build a foundation in the history of scientific development – specifically, how important scientific advances were conceptualized and executed. Understanding this history and the deeper philosophical roots of science will help her become a better, more creative, and thoughtful scientist as she pursues a PhD at MIT next year.

When Eesha is not struggling to keep up with the local lingo and British names for vegetables, she is busy learning about world politics and culture from many different students. She considers herself extremely lucky to be surrounded by such an international cohort of peers and to learn so much through her interactions with them. Other students have passed on cultural quirks that proved useful on trips to Amsterdam, Greece, and Israel; helped Eesha arrange a homestay last December in Berlin; and taught her a whole range of funny sayings in various languages. Because Trinity has many German students,

Eesha also joined the German Society and has been learning German in her free time. Overall, she is really enjoying this year as a taste of England, a taste of the world, and a taste of true friendship.

Comfortable with the Uncomfortable

From disheartening rejections from various Cambridge departments and Pembroke College, to vehicular impediments on the way to the Los Angeles International Airport, it almost felt like Cambridge was not meant to be for H-C scholar-at-large **Ezinne Nwankwo**. This was a huge fall from the joy that came after Ezinne’s graduation as insecurity and uncertainty set in at the time. However, despite her rocky entrance, Ezinne finds herself thoroughly enjoying the rich history that Cambridge and the greater UK have to offer.

Most of Ezinne’s days are spent poring over research articles and attending informal seminars on the impacts of big data and artificial intelligence on society, ethics in mathematics, and intersections of race, gender, and disability. She is trying to understand how to create algorithms that do not discriminate based on certain sensitive characteristics in important decision-making processes, how to create safe and beneficial AI systems, and how to provide access to these systems for *all*. She is interested in the data behind it all, and in using data to empower communities and provide better resources to people. Her work has intersected with philosophers, technologists, and policy-makers in the UK.

Ezinne enjoys meeting the people of Cambridge University and Cambridge, the town. Whether it’s talking to students at formal dinners and Bollywood dances, or finding a little bit of Nigeria right in town at a local church and restaurant, she is slowly but surely building a community for herself. She is also hoping to debut her music career as “DJ Zinny” with her first event in a few weeks as the DJ for a study group entitled “Books ‘n Beats.” This experience has been a test of Ezinne’s community-building skills, and has allowed her to practice true acts of self-care (not just the acts we promise to implement throughout undergrad but never do). With much more time and flexibility, she can be the one to follow up on those proposed coffee dates and dinners in passing, avoiding the common trap that Harvard students fall into when they say “let’s grab a meal sometime.” Cambridge is also giving Ezinne the freedom to explore and do things on her own. She is learning to be flexible and comfortable with the uncomfortable, both in her professional and personal life.

The process of getting there, alone, has also taught her a lot. She’s found it’s true what they say: that you learn so much about yourself in times of trouble. Ezinne is looking forward to learning more about herself, preferably not in times of trouble, but if that turns out to be the case, at least she knows, without a doubt, that she can handle it with grace and humility. And none of this would be possible without the help and support of H-C scholars, past and present.

Cambridge to Cambridge

Kevin Xiong, the John Eliot Scholar at Jesus College, has only split his pants dancing on one occasion thus far. This means the local tailor has only captured ten basis points of his stipend, leaving plenty for travel, subsistence, cacti, and tea.

Kevin dedicated his first term to getting settled into Jesus, meeting others, figuring out how to feed himself, and remembering to bike on the left side of the road. He filled his suite atop Little Trinity with succulents, ferns, and an insensitively-named spineless yucca, along with a few rented pieces from the Jesus art collection. Some combination of these things and his sunny disposition has made the John Eliot room the default gathering place for his loving housemates. Jesus College and the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) have also proven to be incredibly warm and welcoming communities.

Academically, Kevin is loving his AMES course – the taught track in Contemporary Chinese Studies. Thrice a week he bounces through the modern Chinese literature canon and post-1949 Chinese history, course topics that have allowed him to learn about his cultural heritage, sharpen his Chinese skills, and finally put his parents’ Cultural Revolution anecdotes in context. He is also enrolled in a theory module, which lets him reference Foucault and Bourdieu without really understanding them, like the rest of academia. Hopefully

Kevin’s Lent and Easter incarnations will complete a dissertation on Chinese contemporary art.

Outside of classes, Kevin rows on the Jesus crew team (note the connection between stronger glutes and ripped pants), dances with the Ballroom Society, bribes a fellow Jesuan to give him guitar lessons, and experiments with new *aubergine* and *courgette* recipes. He is also in the final stages of mixing his original pop-R&B album – a collaborative effort with many of his undergraduate classmates.

Kevin has been making a conscious effort to travel more, since so many people make fun of his proclivity for Cambridges (he was born in raised in the newer Cambridge). He goes into London frequently to enjoy its wealth of art exhibits; other trips have included rugby at Twickenham and Mariah Carey’s Christmas concert at the O2 (!!!). In December, Kevin and his boyfriend visited Morocco in search of sun, beautiful architecture, and a hike through the Atlas Mountains. Amsterdam, Paris, and Berlin are also on the itinerary.

Kevin is extremely thankful for the experiences that the H-C scholarship have allowed him to take advantage of – and looks forward to putting up a fight with the next John Eliot Scholar when they take over his room. ■

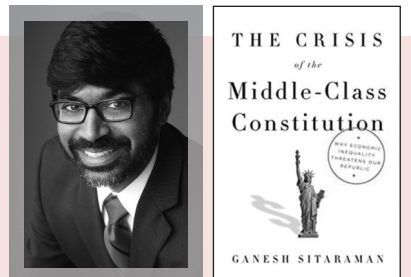
In the News: A Book for These Times from Ganesh Sitaraman (Emmanuel 2004)

“Powerful”, “provocative”, “both history and a call to arms”: These are just some of the plaudits that greeted the release of Ganesh Sitaraman’s book *The Crisis of the Middle-Class Constitution in 2017*. Delving deep into history, economics, and politics to “rethink the past, present, and future of American constitutional development,” Sitaraman argues that growing economic inequality is a core threat to the integrity of American-style liberal democracy and to our constitutional structure, which is predicated on the existence of a strong middle class.

As Policy Director to Elizabeth Warren during her successful Senate campaign, and then as her Senior Counsel in the U.S. Senate from 2011 to 2013, Sitaraman had a close-up view of the economic anxieties that have roiled American politics in recent years, propelling candidates as disparate as Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump to the forefront of a national debate about how to sustain the American ideal of shared prosperity and equal opportunity for all. As he began to look for connections between these issues and the questions of governance that had occupied him during his years as a student of political thought and law,¹ Sitaraman

found himself returning to texts from his time at Cambridge a decade before. Indeed, some of the passages he underlined then found their way into his new book.

Currently a professor at Vanderbilt Law School and a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, Sitaraman believes our nation has reached another critical moment. In earlier times of rising inequality, policies were implemented to rein in the power of the elites and mitigate the concentration of wealth. Similar responses remain available today and Sitaraman’s book outlines a number of concrete proposals.



But we the people need to decide: Do we want to keep the constitutional democracy we have? Because if so, we’ll need to re-commit to preserving the middle class on which it depends. By posing this central question with fresh historic insight and a keen articulation of the stakes involved, Sitaraman has “done all of us a great service,” according to the *New York Times Book Review*² and created an instant classic in the genre of “books to get woke by,” according to the *Village Voice*.³

1 Sitaraman holds an A.B. in government from Harvard, an M.Phil. in political thought and intellectual history from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

2 Angus Deaton, Nobel Prize winning economist, writing for the *New York Times Book Review* (March 20, 2017).

3 Jeremy Carter, co-author of *Hamilton: The Revolution*, writing for *The Village Voice* (June 13, 2017).

Community: *A Note from the Chair*

A Year of Grace

Although many of us continue to describe the scholarship year we underwrite as “a year of grace,” the phrase does not appear on our website or in our descriptions of the scholarships, and it hasn’t for some time. The phrase continues to capture the spirit of what we hope our scholars-elect will enjoy, but its meaning has changed a good bit over the years. Although we do not require our scholars to pursue any particular path of study or attain any academic degree from Cambridge, sometime in the 1980s Cambridge began requiring that our scholars-elect be admitted to a graduate degree program. The experience some of us had before then – self-directed study without enrolling in a graduate degree program, or pursuing a second B.A. that became, after the passage of time and a small payment, an MPhil degree – has not been available for some time. The interest among Harvard seniors in winning a scholarship to fund a short and flexible graduate program at Cambridge has remained relatively steady over time, but the competition to enter Cambridge graduate programs has continued to increase. All of which means that the likelihood has been significantly reduced that a scholar-elect gains admission to a Cambridge graduate program other than one that is a continuation of the scholar-elect’s undergraduate concentration, or to a program that is a continuation of the scholar-elect’s concentration without the scholar-elect having achieved among the best undergraduate academic records in the world in that concentration. The days of a scholar-elect who graduates from Harvard summa cum laude in Physics but then studies Music at Cambridge – or vice versa – are more or less gone.

This year, for the first time in decades, the “year of grace” we had imagined for one of our scholars-elect came into direct conflict with Cambridge’s increasingly rigorous academic requirements. Specifically, we learned that several challenging graduate programs to which one of our scholars-elect had applied had unpublicized minimum GPA requirements that our scholar-elect had not met. Our Selection Committee saw in our scholar-elect brute determination and an amazing trajectory: an Applied Math concentrator with a focus on Statistics who came to Harvard with no education in math who was using her skills during internships to analyze data as a basis for making policy recommendations to benefit low-income minority populations in two large US cities. One of her faculty recommenders commented that she was the first Harvard undergraduate ever who had started in an entry-level math course but went on to complete the much-feared Math 23a, and that she “keeps getting

better.” Ultimately, however, she was not admitted to a graduate program, and as a result was not able to take up residence at the College designated for the scholarship we had awarded her. For our scholarships, in their 96th year, this was a first.

We seek candidates for whom we believe the year in Cambridge will be transformative personally, not necessarily academically.

For our scholar-elect, this was just another challenge, and the personal and academic determination we saw and admired in our scholar-elect came to the fore. She told us her intention was to go to Cambridge anyway, so we gave her the stipend and housing funding that came with her award, and off she went. Once in Cambridge, she encountered several ‘catch-22s’: without being enrolled in a degree program, she could only get a 6-month tourist visa, but with only a tourist visa she could not secure a job or enroll late in a degree program; without a bank account, she could not find a place to live, but in order to open a bank account she needed to provide the address where she was living. She ended up landing a job as a researcher at Cambridge University’s Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence, which sponsored her for a full-year visa, and Emmanuel College offered her housing through June. She is busily at work on Artificial Intelligence applications. It is not the “year of grace” we had in mind for her, but it will be a year about which she will have many good memories, including the fellowship and support of our three other resident scholars. We on the Selection Committee have been reminded – and we now remind our applicants – that Cambridge’s academic requirements are extremely rigorous even though we, in awarding these scholarships, do not care which course of study our scholars-elect pursue, or whether they are ultimately awarded a Cambridge degree. We seek candidates for whom we believe the year in Cambridge will be transformative personally, not necessarily academically.

We have, once again, this past February, awarded scholarships to four astonishingly talented Harvard seniors. Two of them are female concentrators in Philosophy, an academic discipline in which tenured women are particularly few and far between. In fact one of our scholars-elect had been publicly discouraged by a male Philosophy professor from enrolling in a graduate-level seminar primarily because of her gender – at Harvard, in 2017. Social progress comes slowly, but it comes. How wonderful for us, through the scholarships we award to these amazing students, to be able to help it along.

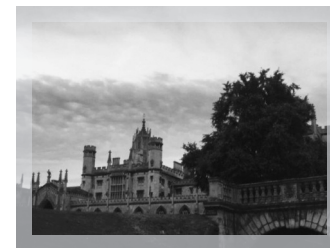
Marc Granetz
March 2018

Summer Scholars Summary

At Cambridge, **Chloe Brooks ’19** studied one-on-one with Prof. Philip Hardie of Trinity College, a “veritable rockstar” of the Classics. She spent the first half of her summer reading, translating, and writing on the *Eclogues*, Virgil’s first book of poetry. In the second half, she wrote a paper “of monstrous proportions,” tracing moments of experience in nature through Lucretius, Virgil, Milton, and Wordsworth. Brooks expects this experience will prove practically very useful as she prepares a joint thesis combining English and Latin poetry in a similar way. Academic studies aside, Brooks found her time in Cambridge to be “wonderfully enriching as a cultural experience,” particularly seeing multiple outstanding theater productions and taking two literary trips: one to a T.S. Eliot festival in “Little Gidding” and another to a conference on Wordsworth in the Lake District, the area that inspired much of Wordsworth’s early poetry. At Cambridge, her accommodations were “lovely” and hours spent collecting blackberries and plums in the rolling fields behind Trinity made for some of the best memories of her trip.

For **Julia Fine ’19**, the summer at Emmanuel College was “truly transformative,” academically and personally. Working one-on-one with Politics and International Studies Professor Anjali Bhardwaj-Datta, Fine focused on the Partition of India and Pakistan (2017 marked the 70th anniversary of this event). Specifically, Fine explored memoirs as a means to expand the institutional archives and destabilize high political narratives about Partition. This work developed into a 25-page paper, which Fine is finalizing and intends to submit for publication. She describes her summer as “incredibly beneficial for me as a scholar” and a wonderful opportunity to experience a rich academic and historic environment. She took advantage of many Cambridge activities, such as exploring the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Wren Library, and seeing Shakespeare performances in the gardens of the College, and made the most of her proximity to London where she especially loved the Tate Modern and Victoria and Albert museums, and a one-man performance of a *Tale of Two Cities* at the Dickens Museum. Travel before and during the fellowship took her to Amsterdam, Berlin, Prague, Florence, and Paris, as well as to Oxford and Canterbury within the UK.

Kelsey Ichikawa ’19 left Cambridge with “a clearer understanding of the discipline of science studies, important reflections on my future career path, appreciation for the differences and similarities between the US and the UK, and fond memories of the sights and sensations I experienced in the many places I visited.” Advised by Dr. Richard Staley of the History & Philosophy of Science Department, Ichikawa’s project focused on the creation of the Climatic



Research Unit at the University of East Anglia, and its visionary, founding scientist, Hubert Lamb. Immersing herself in a time

period (the Cold War) when “environmentalism” and “climate change” didn’t carry the same connotations they do now, Ichikawa could examine current climate debates with a more critical eye and see how “science, politics, funding, and institutional habits are always intertwined.” Focusing on a subject very different from her neurobiology concentration at Harvard allowed Ichikawa to explore her interest in the history and philosophy of science, while making new friends afforded great opportunities to exchange insights about life, culture, and politics in different countries and universities. In Ichikawa’s experience, the H-C Fellowship is “definitely the type of program where you get out what you put in.”



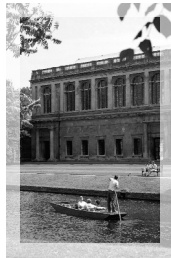
For **Mitchell Johns ’19**, the summer offered a “perfect mix of academic work, challenging discussion, and new personal experience.” Working with English professor Ewan Jones – a 19th-century-ist with a deep knowledge of the Modern period, an NYC journalist-turned-scholar, a Coleridge

expert, and a member of Cambridge’s digital humanities Concept Lab – entailed more reading and less coding than Johns had anticipated, but it left him with the base of knowledge and formal training to tackle broad problems in “distant reading,” where large sets of texts are read by computer and analyzed for trends in language and sentence structures. These are skills Johns hopes to use for his senior thesis in English. Emmanuel College provided an ideal setting, especially the paddock, which was perfect for spending entire afternoons with a novel. Other highlights: the numerous events and festivals held in Cambridge during the summer; conversations with other members of the diverse English faculty; and the chance to travel within the UK and elsewhere in Europe. For future fellows, Johns recommends the Cambridge statue walk, making a point of reaching out to other scholars and faculty with similar interests, and the Eurostar Snap for a cheap way to see other cities in Europe.

Valia Leifer ’19 spent her summer in Professor Venkatraman Ramakrishnan’s molecular biology laboratory conducting research on the role of the PTCH1 protein in signaling between mammalian cells and within individual cells. Working with Dr. Ramakrishnan – a Nobel laureate and the president of the Royal Society – was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. And while going abroad for a full summer, to a country where she’d never been and knew very few people, seemed a big risk, Leifer didn’t know “how welcoming, inspiring, and kind the people in Venki’s lab would be, how I would become very close friends with some of the other Harvard fellows, or how wonderful Cambridge is.” On trips to London, visiting the Churchill War Rooms Museum and seeing Agatha Christie’s

Memories of Cambridge

By Tamara Fernando (*Jesus* 2016)



I am on a mid-to-small size tropical island reflecting on Cambridge and my UK fellowship year from an apartment on a street called Hyde Park. If I were to open my umbrella (the mid-day sun is treacherous) and enter the chaos and noise of the street to make my way east, dodging rickshaws in rainbow hues, I would soon come to Lipton Circus. If I boarded a rickety tin bus up north, I would emerge in the business and financial district, which everyone (rather unreflectively and with very little humour) calls Slave Island.

To reflect implies that one looks back on something, which is strange because, one year later, based back in Sri Lanka, I feel even more deeply embedded in the UK. In my post-colonial nation, Oxbridge rules supreme. “Undergraduate in America?” is usually met with a bored “How far away!” or, at best, with “Harvard...hmm, yes, perhaps I recall that from one of those Hollywood movies.” In comparison, “Spent the last year at Cambridge” is greeted with an enthusiastic, “Why, let me tell you the joke my great-grand-uncle used to make about his matriculation!”; “Oh but you must join the local society”; “Oh, yes of course, and surely you know that Lalith Athulathmudali [former Sri Lankan Cabinet Minister] was the jewel of Jesus College” (distinguishing between Jesus, Oxford and Jesus, Cambridge does not occur to people); or “Oh and do you know the story about that one address S.W.R.D. Bandaranayake [Prime Minister of Sri Lanka 1956-59] gave at the Union?”

The practices and rituals of the picturesque, gingerbread postcard town where I spent the last year are intertwined with the cultural legacy of my island, 5,000 miles away. A local debate project I am heading requires a visit to a boys’ school by the sea in Colombo. There to meet the ‘school warden,’ my colleague unknowingly walks across the sacred sanctum of the quadrangle, much to the horror of the watching students. Ah, here is the hierarchy and “fellows-only” rule of Kings and Trinity and Jesus, replicated on a warmer, greener site, nestled by the Indian Ocean. One of the high points of political agitation during my time in Sri Lanka was the conservative Buddhist president’s re-enactment of a law that “prohibits the sale of alcohol to women in a tavern.” Just like the quadrangle by the sea, this too, is a direct colonial spillover, unaddressed in the 80 years since the British ceased direct rule of Lanka.

My “year of grace” made evident and tangible the connections and relationships between England and Sri Lanka, both of which I now call home. But outside of law, custom, and colonial legacy, England also pulled me closer to Sri Lanka on an academic level. During my year at Cambridge, a chance meeting at Gonville and Caius led to my meeting my future supervisor, the Sri Lankan historian Sujit Sivasunderam, with whom I will be starting a DPhil on an International Trust scholarship in April. It turns out that my happenstance discoveries about Lanka and the British can have more formal routes of inquiry too!

One thing historians caution against is reading historical events into the fabric of daily lives. And indeed, England for me was sneaking into philosophy seminars in the Trinity SCR, getting lost in Dublin’s alleyways, taking flights to Barcelona which cost less than the train ticket to get to Luton Airport, and, indeed, consuming heady amounts of Jesus College Port. To reduce my year in England to a set of colonial “Aha!” moments would not be fair, or accurate, nor, I take it, good historical practice.

Governance Committee 2017-2018

John Gilmore
Trinity ’71

Robert Shapiro
Trinity ’73

Scott Mead
Emmanuel ’77

Marc Granetz
Emmanuel ’79

Jacqueline Osherow
Trinity ’79

Elisabeth Reynolds
Trinity ’90

Clarence Mah
Emmanuel ’93

Amanda Pustilnik
Emmanuel ’00

Sarah Russell
Trinity ’00

Joshua Goodman
Jesus ’01

Ryan Ripple
Pembroke ’06

Moir Weigel
Emmanuel ’08

Jonathan Weigel
Pembroke ’10

James Pelletier
Pembroke ’12

Algorithms, Artificial Intelligence, and Social Good

An update from Rediet Abebe (*Pembroke* 2013)

My interest in using mathematics to improve social welfare began as an undergrad and fully crystallized during my year at Cambridge, where I began exploring the subjects that have led to my current research agenda: using techniques from algorithms, mechanism design, and optimization to improve access to opportunity, especially in disadvantaged communities. Along the way I co-founded **Mechanism Design for Social Good**, an interdisciplinary, multi-institutional research group and co-organized the first workshop on the same topic at the 2017 ACM Conference on Economics and Computation.

For a field to benefit society, it must also foster diversity and inclusivity. Despite the ever-increasing impact of computers and artificial intelligence, Black researchers are underrepresented in the AI field. To change this, and to address both the impact of algorithmic tools in exacerbating inequality and the uneven distribution of benefits from AI innovations, I co-founded a new group, called **Black in AI**. Black in AI currently has more than 500 members, including many from my home country of Ethiopia. We held our first workshop at the annual NIPS (Neural Information Processing Systems) conference in December 2017 (NIPS is the largest conference on machine learning worldwide). That workshop has already sparked new research collaborations and resource sharing and I am optimistic that the presence of Black researchers in AI will grow. If you’re interested, or just want to say hi, please contact me: red@cs.cornell.edu.

Summer Scholars Summary

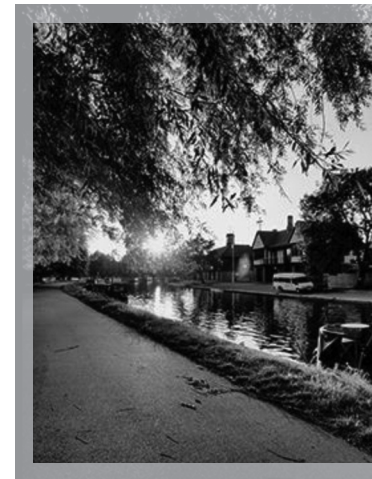
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The Mousetrap were two favorite activities. Overall, Leifer thinks Cambridge was the best summer of her life: “I learned to travel on my own, to conduct independent scientific research, to appreciate time alone on my walks, and to navigate a brand new place.” Moreover, she’ll be able to continue her research project under the supervision of Dr. Alan Brown, a senior postdoctoral fellow in Ramakrishnan’s lab who became an assistant professor at the Harvard Medical School in 2017.

Retracing Wordsworth’s steps up Mount Snowdon in Wales, **Lynnea Shuck ’19** knew that the poet’s description of sublime spiritual experience in “The Prelude” required “no exaggeration or artistic liberty.” In Shuck’s own words: “The mist curled around the hills and valleys, and the sun shining on the mist



created a magnificent cathedral out of the landscape.” Snowdon was only one of many adventures in eight weeks “brimming with discovery and delight.” Her summer left Shuck with an intricate understanding of English Romantic poetry and, proudly, her first research paper, which examines religious, philosophical, and linguistic connections in Wordsworth’s poems and works by Coleridge and Byron. Examining original manuscripts and visiting the places that inspired these writers were “unparalleled opportunities.” Shuck’s research also took her well beyond Cambridge: to the French countryside, where she thought



about rural education in Rousseau; to Amsterdam, where she examined English philosophy of religion; and, most thrillingly, to the Lake District where she studied unpublished manuscripts of Wordsworth at his home, Dove Cottage, and attended a few sessions of the annual Wordsworth Summer Conference. Shuck left

the conference, and the summer, “with a renewed sense of independence as a scholar: confident in my ability to self-direct my research, to discover new and exciting perspectives, and to consider the validity of those perspectives.”

Kelly Xia ’19 spent her H-C summer as a “caveman” – in a basement office (“the Cave”) of Professor Clare Grey’s chemistry lab, which conducts research on batteries using nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) machines. There, Xia

focused on redox flow batteries, which are being developed as a safe, environmentally friendly, and cost-efficient method for large, grid-scale electricity storage. She was grateful for the community of her fellow Cavemen, with whom she shared frequent dinners of Chinese takeout, a tour of the Wren Library and Trinity Chapel, and punting on the Cam. Thanks to her labmates, she never felt lonely and learned important new traditions, such as “Team Cheese” – essentially a spontaneous gathering to eat cheese. Weekends allowed for trips: for example, to Manchester, where Xia attended a flow battery conference with the professor of her Harvard research group; to Edinburgh, where she learned to dance the ceilidh and hiked Arthur’s Seat; and to Berlin and London. It was a satisfying moment when, at the end of the summer, after many failed experiments and some successful ones, the information fell into place and Xia’s team had “the answer” to their research question. Xia has since been writing up this work to submit to journals and considers it possible that graduate studies could bring her back to Cambridge.

Matthew Munroe ’17 admits to being “a little scared” heading into his internship at London’s Gate Theater, but between his incredibly welcoming Airbnb host and his theater colleagues, who “quickly became like family,” he soon realized his fears were unfounded. Surreally, a sense of connection and community was hastened by the Grenfell Tower fire, which occurred less than two weeks after he arrived. “Living in Portobello and working in Notting Hill, both less than a mile from the tower, the grief in the air was palpable.” The weekend

after the fire, Munroe joined several co-workers volunteering at local shelters. His two main tasks at the Gate, scheduling auditions and reading scripts for the artistic director, both felt meaningful. Calling and negotiating with agents provided useful real-world experience for a career in directing and arts administration, while reviewing and analyzing scripts was even more fun and led to the discovery of a new favorite, the American playwright Jordan Seavey. Not surprisingly, much of Munroe’s free time was spent seeing plays, on average four per week, in venues small and large. Many were amazing, but a production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Globe stood out for the sheer brilliance of the director, Daniel Kramer, whose class Munroe had taken the previous fall. Side-trips to Stonehenge, Bath, and Cambridge were also memorable. Overall, Munroe describes his summer as “a life-changing experience” and “the perfect way to transition from college to the real world.” ■

