

POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



SKIDMORE COLLEGE

Dear Students,

It is my pleasure to write to you as the new chair of the Political Science Department. I took on the role in June. During the summer months my responsibilities were few. My most important and happiest task was to send out news that Timur Ocakli had arrived. Professors Biberman-Ocakli and Ocakli welcomed their son on July 5, 2017. A recent picture of Timur is included in the newsletter.

As the semester got underway, I was initiated into the other responsibilities of chair, including approving study abroad credits and signing major and minor declarations. I was happy to meet many of you while taking care of this paperwork and I look forward to talking with more of you about your academic and professional plans. Please feel free to stop in and say hello or to e-mail me with any questions that you may have. You can find me in Ladd 306B or contact me at ntaylor@skidmore.edu.

There are new faces among the Political Science faculty! We are delighted that Professor Mara Suttman-Lea has joined our department to offers courses in American politics. Professor Megan Turnbull is a very welcome addition to our Comparative Politics and International Relations faculty. Both Professors Suttman-Lea and Turnbull are offering new special topics courses in the spring and I urge to you take a look at those course descriptions.

There is a new section of our newsletter: Recent Alumni Updates. Thank you to Professors Biberman-Ocakli and Ocakli for gathering news of Political Science majors who graduated during the past few years. We miss our former students and are glad to know what post-Skidmore life brings. So, please encourage your friends to send us their news. And, before we know it, it will be time to put together the newsletter for the fall of 2018, 2019, 2020... Be sure to keep us in mind when you go off into the world!

Barbara McDonough and the Political Science student assistants went to work on our newsletter as soon as the semester got underway. They have put together yet another terrific account of the happenings in the Department, as well as the many things we are doing off campus. Thank you to Barbara, the student assistants, and all that contributed to newsletter.

Best wishes to you during the second half of the fall semester!

Natalie Taylor
Associate Professor and Chair

FACULTY NEWS

Collected by Barbara Contin '19

Professor Yelena Biberman-Ocakli is enjoying her sabbatical alongside a new member of the Ocakli family – Timur. During the summer, she collaborated with Brian Roberge '18 on a new project exploring the military and political implications of genetic weapons. Their work was supported by the Faculty Student Summer Research Program. Her article, entitled “How We Know What We Know about Pakistan: *New York Times* news production, 1954-71,” was recently published in *Modern Asian Studies*. The article explores public knowledge creation by examining how the *New York Times* produced Pakistan news between 1954 and 1971, the formative period of US-Pakistan relations. Another



article, which Professor Biberman co-authored with Rachel Castellano '16, entitled “Genocidal Violence, Nation-Building, and the Bloody Birth of Bangladesh,” was published in *Asian Security*. Professor Biberman also co-authored an article with Trevor Cloen '18 on prison breaks carried out by terrorist organizations, and it is currently under review by a scholarly journal. Professor Biberman is now continuing her genetic weapons project, as well as another new project, which examines peacetime militias in China, India, Russia, and the United States.

Professor Feryaz Ocakli expanded his research to new and exciting directions this past year. His article, entitled “Reconfiguring State-Business Relations in Turkey: Housing and Hydroelectric Energy Sectors in Comparative Perspective” is coming out soon. It examines the blurring of the distinctions between state and market forces in Turkey and critiques simplistic formulations of the concept of neoliberalism in the study of political economy. He worked with Ben Rudman '18 this past summer on a new research project that investigates the contemporary manifestations of genocide denial.

Professor Graney is busy teaching an overload of classes and directing the Gender Studies program. She is enjoying all of her classes and especially her FYE seminar “Mother Russia’s Daughters and Sons” with peer mentor and PL major extraordinaire Nosheen Hotaki. Nosheen and Prof. Graney took the FYE class (and a couple of students from Prof. Kent’s religion class on Goddesses, plus Prof. Graney’s daughter Mimi) to the Museum of Russian Icons for a field trip where their docent was Prof. Graney’s freshman year history professor at Holy Cross, Dr. Jim Flynn! (Now retired!) It was really fun for Prof. Graney to see him again with a class of her own. On the way home, they stopped in West Springfield, MA for a Russian tea party with delicious tea, pirozhki, vinagret beet salad and other yummy treats. [See photos from her class trip on page 4](#)

Professor Mann spent a bit of the past summer enjoying the outdoors in upstate NY with his family. Among the highlights were taking his nine-year-old daughter on her very first backpacking trip and taking his seven-year-old son on a father/son canoe camping trip. He also went to visit family in Michigan, Utah, and California. He devoted much of the summer to his academic research. He completed a manuscript about the educational value of the Election Research course he taught in fall 2016. Professor Mann, Chloe Singer ('18), and other co-authors conducted an online survey of what students learned about the value in conducting research by visiting voting polling places on Election Day. The student survey spanned Skidmore and 21 colleges and universities around the United States that had participated in the Polling Place Observation Project coordinated by Professor Mann, Charles Stewart III (MIT) and Michael Herron (Dartmouth). Professor Mann submitted several additional manuscripts about his field experiment research on increasing political participation: One paper, written with past students, partners with Secretary of State offices to study the most effective ways to encourage voter registration. Another paper looked at how different messages influence whether people will contact their elected representatives. A third paper examined the effectiveness of bilingual mailings vs. English only mailings in mobilizing Latinx voters. He also co-organized the first ever Election Sciences, Reform, and Administration Conference, bringing scholars and election officials together to discuss election research, election administration, and voting reforms.

Professor Seyb reports to us from the Dean’s Office. “I continue to sign documents and crush dreams as the Associate Dean of the Faculty for Student Academic Affairs (Apropos the crushing dreams part of my job, I find that most of my emails now begin with some version of “I am sorry to report that college policy prevents you from....”). I continue to be dumbstruck by the competence, goodwill, and tolerance for my—to use a technical administrative term—chuckleheadedness the people with whom I work display every day. It may be hard knock life for them, but it is a comfortable sinecure for me. I miss all of my Political Science



Department colleagues and students, but I am comforted by the thought that everyone is certainly thriving while I am away being a used car salesman with a rank.”

Professor Suttman-Lea is busy putting together the pilot study for her research project, *The Deserving Voter: Poll Worker Decision Making at the American Ballot Box*, funded by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Election Data and Science Lab. Poll workers are the most direct point of contact voters have with election laws and administration. This project assesses the political attitudes and decision-making process of these street-level bureaucrats on the front lines of election administration. She examines who poll workers are, what political preferences they hold, and the extent to which

they make biased evaluations of voter eligibility on the basis of observable characteristics like race, age, and gender. She is also working on developing a new set of case studies for her book project, *Convenience at a Cost: The Unintended Consequences of Voting Reforms*, and is very excited to be working with Chloe Singer, '18 and Megan Weitzner '19 on both of these projects.

Next semester, Professor Suttman-Lea will be teaching Introduction to American Politics, the Politics of Congress, and a special topics course on political campaigns and democratic norms in the United States. In between teaching and research, Professor Suttman-Lea has also (somehow!) found the time to run the Saratoga Palio half-marathon and the Can Lake 50k ultramarathon in Canandaigua, New York. She is also running the New York City Marathon in early November on behalf of her father and for Team Fox, an organization dedicated to researching cures for Parkinson's disease.



Professor Flagg Taylor will be participating in two upcoming events, the first is in Washington DC to mark the 100th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. On November 8th he will be sitting in a panel on called "Soviet Totalitarianism, the Captive Mind, and Uncivil Society." Other panelists include Joshua Rubenstein, Martin Palous and Natan Sharansky. They will be tackling questions such as how can human beings survive when politics is poisonous? How can the mind escape the prison communism builds for it? How does one find friends in a world of comrades? Professor Taylor will also be giving the d'Alzone lecture at Assmp-tion College on Novmber 3rd.

Professor Natalie Taylor took part in "Wollapalooza!" a mini-conference at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association. "Wollapalooza!" brought together Mary Wollstonecraft scholars from around the world to discuss their current projects, many of which will appear in a volume of essays, *The Wollstonecraftian Mind*. Professor Taylor's essay is on Mary Wollstonecraft and the social contract tradition. 2017 marks the centennial anniversary of women's suffrage in New York State. She also gave a talk at the Saratoga Spring Public Library, "Votes for Women," on the changing political strategies that led to women's suffrage in the state and eventually in the nation. Later this year, she will participate in a seminar for high school teachers, "Great Leaders of Rochester Reform: Abolitionism, Women's Rights, and Religious Revivalism," at Rochester Institute of Technology in November. Currently, Professor Taylor is working on a chapter on Susan B. Anthony for a volume of essays on statesmanship.

Professor Turner chaired the Saratoga Springs Charter Review Commission for the past 18 months. The experience challenged all his preconceptions on constitutional design, media, voters, campaigns and the value of civic engagement. Since September, Professor Turner gives 3-4 talks a week educating people about the charter in private houses and public forums, and the experience gave him a tremendous appreciation for how democracy works in practice.

FACULTY NEWS

Professor Megan Turnbull kicked off the semester presenting new research on electoral violence in Africa at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in San Francisco. Over the past few weeks, she's been busy working on her book manuscript, tentatively titled "State Responses to Armed Groups: Democracy and State-Building in Africa." The project examines how elections incentivize governments to collaborate with, tolerate, or repress armed groups and in turn, how these different government strategies impact the consolidation of state authority. She's very excited to be working with the excellent research assistants in the department who have been gathering data on government-armed group interactions in Kenya, Brazil, Colombia, Turkey, and Pakistan. In November, Megan will be presenting more of her research at the International Studies Association Northeast Annual Meeting in Providence, Rhode Island. Off-campus, Megan has been running in the Saratoga Spa State Park, was a proud member of the "Hateful Gait" team for the Saratoga Palio 5k, and ran in the Great Pumpkin Challenge 10k on October 14.



Professor Katie Zuber: As some students have already heard, I recently accepted a position as Assistant Director of Policy & Research at the Rockefeller Insti-

tute of Government, a public policy think tank in Albany which specializes in state and local government issues. Although I am saddened to depart from Skidmore somewhat earlier than expected, I am working on several new and exciting projects at the Institute. As just one example, my colleagues and I are developing a comprehensive guide which examines the logic of New York State Government through the lens of the opioid crisis. What resources are currently available to police, fire, EMS and other first responders at the local level? How has New York State responded to the growing epidemic? Do shifting policies at the federal level, including a renewed push for mandatory minimum sentencing rather than an emphasis on treatment, influence the State's response? These are just a handful of the questions we are prepared to ask as we seek to uncover the inner workings of New York State government. Although I will certainly miss my time here in the classroom, I will be back to teach a section of Intro to American Politics in the spring. Until then, enjoy the rest of the fall semester!!

PROF GRANNEY'S CLASS TRIP TO THE MUSEUM OF RUSSIAN ICONS



THE FACES OF CONSTITUTION DAY



EXECUTIVE ACTION, THEN AND NOW

JASON SUTHERLAND '18



In honor of Constitution Day, the Political Science Department hosted a dialogue on executive action. Professor Flagg Taylor moderated the discussion between speakers Saikrishna Prakash, of the University of Virginia School of Law, and Gregory Weiner, of the Assumption College Political Science Department.

The event opened with a discussion of the separation of powers. Both Professor Prakash and Professor Weiner referred back to Montesquieu, an inspiration to the founders, on this topic. Montesquieu argues in *The Spirit of the Laws* that a separation of powers between legislative, executive, and judicial bodies is necessary to prevent tyranny from emerging. The founders put this idea into practice when drafting the Constitution. What emerged from the Constitutional Convention was the presidency, an executive position unlike that of any regime in existence.

Our two speakers brought varied perspectives to the questions surrounding executive power. In his book, *Imperial from the Beginning: The Constitution of the Original Executive*, Professor Prakash argues that the American presidency, at its conception, was similar in power to a republican monarchy. During the discussion, he pointed out that much of the debate between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists centered on this question. He also reiterated the argument from his book: the president's discretion in executing the laws, in foreign policy, and in the role of commander in chief, have long made the executive a monarchical figure.

Professor Weiner pushed back on the idea that the president serves as monarch. He discussed *Federalist* number 69, in which Hamilton distinguishes the presidency from the English monarchy. Hamilton argues that the president is less powerful than a monarch, and even goes as far to say that president will have less power over his constituents than the governor of New York has over his. Professor Weiner also added that liberty should be defined as how secure we are. Through the separation of powers, the Constitution ensures that there is no concentration of total power in one person or institution. Our liberty is secured by this arrangement.

The discussion then shifted to questions surrounding the modern-day presidency. Professor Taylor asked each of the speakers whether they believed that Americans have become regularized to overreaches of executive action. In response, Professor Prakash said that Americans have become too accustomed to the fact that war powers have practically become the possession of the president. War powers were intended to be the domain of Congress; a simple reading of the Constitution confirms this. The issue today is that Congress has not acted to check the growing power of the presidency, even when it can rightfully do so.

At the conclusion of the event, both speakers agreed that the issue of growing executive action should be dealt with by Congress. The current state of executive action is due, in part, to the issues Congress faces in facilitating collective action. Professor Weiner even suggested that members of Congress find it easier when rerunning for office to blame the president for the country's issues, rather than shifting focus to Congress itself. Without a fundamental change in how congress behaves, the growth of executive action is likely to continue.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING STUDENT AND ALUMNI CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS EDITION OF THE POLITICAL SCIENCE NEWSLETTER

Zachary Altman '19, Isabelle Bertolozzi '18, Elijah Bliss '20, Alexis Cantor '18, Rachel Castellano '16, Effrosyni Chantzi '17, Biba Contin '19, Olivia Cox '18, Izzy Fischer '18, Hannah Fishman '19, Kira Geary '18, Orr Genish '17, Corinna Goodman '16, David Gyampo '19, Nosheen Hotaki '18, Jane Huber '19, Henry Jaffe '18, Marcella Jewell '15, Claudia Lamberty '18, Yiren Lyu '19, Rachel McPherson '19, Saleem Mohamed '15, Jacob Nathan '15, Jackson Price '18, Dylan Quin '18, Brian Roberge '18, Amy Rowland '19, Antigone Scaperdas '19, Jillian Seigel '18, Andrew Shi '15, Matthew Simkowitz '19, Chloe Singer '18, Nigel Smith '17, Jason Sutherland '18, Rachael Thomeer '18, Emma Xuxu Marshall '16, Lindsay Walsh '20

REFLECTION: BERLIN CALLING

LINDSAY WALSH '20



A captivating discussion was held in the Filene Auditorium on German Reunification Day as Paul Hockenos spoke on his new book entitled, "Berlin Calling: A Story of Anarchy, Music, the Wall, and the Birth of the New Berlin." Hockenos was able to address some of the most pressing questions on the artwork of the Berlin Wall as well as its regulations, its momentous crash, and the integration of culture that swept through Berlin during the aftermath. These topics were illustrated through the author's first-hand accounts from his time in Berlin, including his interactions with its residents and even his exposure to the punk rock music of the time period.

Hockenos described West Berlin as being isolated in its inability to efficiently receive imports from the US, UK, France, or elsewhere. The fact that West Berlin was completely surrounded for decades by Soviet-controlled East Berlin and Eastern Germany meant that West Berlin was accessible only through the air or by federally controlled railroads and autobahns. Hockenos recounted instances in which elderly, retired residents were briefly

allowed to travel outside of West Berlin, and were given extensive shopping lists from their grandchildren filled with unavailable items such as new leather jackets or posters and music by famous celebrities. Although West Berlin was considered free and was blocked off from all Soviet-controlled regions, the sequestration imposed by the Berlin Wall limited the mobility of its residents and their ability to make contact outside its borders. A surprising element to the seclusion of West Berlin that Hockenos mentioned was the lack of eagerness amongst its students to travel outside its borders. He went into great detail in describing the many inconveniences that residents in West Berlin faced, and their frustration was evidenced in the artwork that covered the West side of the Berlin Wall. Despite this, he claimed that most students had no desire to travel into East Berlin or elsewhere.

In an especially noteworthy discussion, Hockenos commented on the rise of unemployment, especially in East Berlin, in the early 1990s. He described a period of disarray as the economies of East and West Berlin were suddenly brought together in the anarchic first few years after the wall came down. Hockenos touched upon the incongruences in the job markets of both East and West Berlin as well as incongruences that had developed in their cultures. His talk left the entire audience fascinated with Germany's changing political structure and economy in the years following the fall of the Berlin Wall.

THE LONG STRUGGLE FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINE

AN OCTOBER 2ND LECTURE BY JEREMY PRESSMAN, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY FERYAZ OCAKLI

Because neither side in the battle for Israel-Palestine is going to disappear, ending the struggle for Israel-Palestine would require Israeli and Palestinian concessions. When we think about resolving the conflict the same old options are on the table, variants of the one-state and two-state solution. In this talk, we'll consider the core questions: What are the differences between the variants? What are the pros and cons for each option? What obstacles stand in the way of realizing a resolution?

About the Jacob Perlow Series: A generous grant from the estate of Jacob Perlow - an immigrant to the United States in the 1920s, a successful business man deeply interested in religion and philosophy, and a man who was committed to furthering Jewish education - supports annual lectures and presentations to the College and Capital District community on issues broadly related to Jews and Judaism.

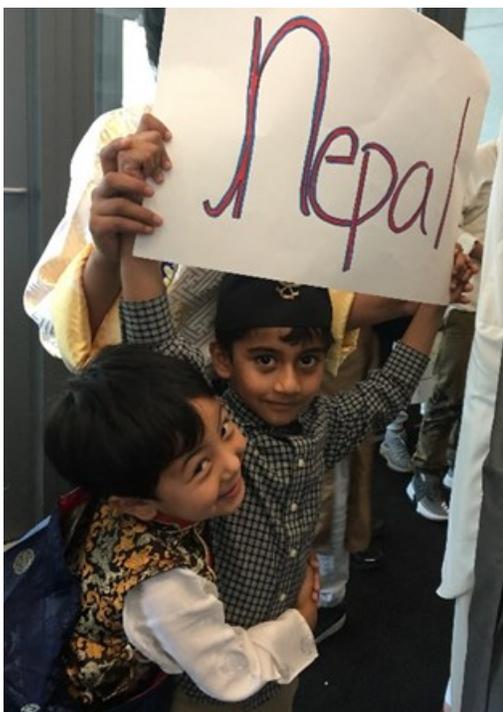


Jeremy Pressman, Professor of Political Science and Director of Middle East Studies, University of Connecticut

SUMMER EXPERIENCES

OPPORTUNITIES AT HOME AND ABROAD

Claudia Lamberty '18



After a transformative semester studying politics and economic development in Argentina and Chile, my summer internship with the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Refugee Youth Summer Academy (RYSA) was absolutely a step in the right direction. My international perspective and adoration for children led me to take on a position working for and with the vulnerable refugee population of New York City..

I was hired by the IRC to participate in an 8-week intensive summer program designed to academically, emotionally and socially prepare refugee children for life in the United States. The program was comprised of students ages 4 to 18 years old and represented nations such as Afghanistan, Myanmar, Nepal, Tibet, Syria, Ecuador, Venezuela, Sudan, Chad and Tajikistan. While many students had been living in New York for over a year, the majority of the students were entering the New York City public school system for the first time this fall. This multi-cultural experience required personnel committed to teaching children how to embrace their identities and restore confidence after finding refuge in a foreign country.

RYSA was designed to prepare the children for future challenges and successes both environmental and personal. As a program intern, my responsibilities included supporting a class of children ages 8 to 12. RYSA did not only represent a curriculum rooted in teaching English as a second language, but educating students on ways to exercise mindfulness, emotional management and understanding the complexities of their perseverance. My additional roles included serving as a translator for Spanish speaking parents and assisting program directors with a wide range of administrative tasks and research.

The opportunity to think critically about global refugee crises and integration processes was stimulating and inspiring. This semester, I am looking forward to gaining a more academically grounded understanding of world crises and international responses to them. My research reflects a willingness to fully comprehend and embrace the lived-experience of injustice, violence and systematic oppression. I have a heightened interest in applying to graduate school once I have more work and research experience in protecting human rights, advocating for vulnerable youth populations, and further understanding international development with respect to institutional stability and public policy.

I encourage other Skidmore students to seek out similar opportunities and take full advantage of resources provided by the college. I would like to thank the 2019 Parents Council for supporting this influential experience.



THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM FOUNDATION

Jason Sutherland '18

Through a grant from the RCIA (Responsible Citizenship Intern Award), I spent most of my summer in Washington D.C. working for the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation (VOC). The VOC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, educational organization devoted to commemorating the lives of the millions of victims of past and present totalitarian regimes. During my time as an academic programs intern, I researched Marxist political thought. I also wrote articles concerning the ongoing crisis in Venezuela and the political thought of Vaclav Havel to be published on the VOC Dissident blog.

The VOC is a very active organization. On top of my specific duties as an intern, I participated in many meaningful events hosted by the VOC which connected American citizens with real victims of totalitarianism. I was part of a discussion with Venezuelan political protestors who are fighting against the transformation of Venezuelan democracy into authoritarianism under President Nicolas Maduro. On a separate occasion, I had the opportunity to listen to the testimony of a student who fled across the North Korea-China border at 14 years old without any family or connections to turn to outside of his country.

Experiences such as these left serious impressions upon me that I will not forget.

On a lighter note, I also got to explore many of D.C.'s museums and monuments. The city is a lot of fun in the summer if you can take the heat (seriously, it's a furnace). My friends and family also came to visit during my stay, which was a blast. All in all, it was a summer well spent and I would tell anyone to spend a summer in D.C. if they can. This internship was an immensely valuable experience, and I would like to thank the RCIA committee for granting me the funding to continue my education.



Jason on rooftop of VOC Capitol Hill office

NO SUCH THING AS A TYPICAL DAY AT THE DCCC!

ALEXIS CANTOR '18

This summer, I had the opportunity to intern in Washington, D.C. at the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee thanks to a SEE-Beyond Award. The official campaign arm of House Democrats, the DCCC recruits, trains, and funds Democratic congressional candidates, as well as provides campaigns with communications, research, and field support. Although I worked on Capitol Hill, my experience differed from a traditional Hill internship in that I was working for a party committee rather than a particular representative or senator.

As a Communications Intern, I assisted committee spokespersons in communicating a unified Democratic message in both national and local press. I also worked with regional press staff to promote candidates in congressional districts across the country. My duties included media monitoring, drafting press releases and statements, conducting research, preparing reports of TV and radio coverage, and providing Spanish-English translation support.

I also had the opportunity to work on some more creative projects, like writing an op-ed defending the Affordable Care Act for a first-time congressional candidate.

The most interesting part of the internship for me was being able to see the reality of the everyday operations of a national party committee. I went into the internship with few expectations and little sense of what the work consist of, and quickly found that there was no such thing as a "typical day." This was especially true within the communications department, where the work was largely determined by whichever story happened to dominate the news cycle on a given week.

While I can't say that this internship helped me to narrow my post-grad plans, I really enjoyed being able to observe the daily functions of a major party committee and am grateful to have had this opportunity. I look forward to integrating my practical experience into my coursework in the Political Science Department and as well as outside research.

SUMMER DOUBLE FEATURE: COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND THE INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL

BRIAN ROBERGE '18

This summer, I participated in both a collaborative research project with Professor Yelena Biberman-Ocakli and an internship with the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, thanks to opportunities from the Political Science department and the Levine Internship Award. Both experiences enabled me to practice what I've learned in my time here at Skidmore in ways I didn't expect.

Working with Professor Biberman-Ocakli was extremely rewarding for me, as her work ethic and professional experience structured our methods and the passion we shared for investigating new and cutting edge ideas fueled our research and design. I have taken many classes with Professor Biberman-Ocakli, and this summer we took our foundational knowledge of historical and modern warfare alongside political science research methods to investigate genetic engineering and its impact on modern biological warfare. We desired to determine how modern innovations and discoveries within the study of genetics, and subsequently, synthetic genetic engineering, will potentially impact biological warfare.

In our research, we examined modern scientific journals, historical analyses of biological warfare, and we had many conversations with experts in genetics, such as Professor Bernie Possidente, in which we grew our understanding of the sciences we were investigating. We studied foundational texts in the fields of genetics and biological engineering, the historical trend of warfare, and government studies on biological warfare. These materials, plus the direction we received from our interviews, determined what we felt were some conceivable scenarios and possible consequences.

We determined that there would be situations where advances in technologies could make genetic engineering and genetic information tactically viable and others where current methods and technology are sufficient. We argue that genetic engineering will be most applicable in scenarios of mass coercion, where a state may engineer a synthetic bio-organism that can be transmitted through a population without trace, and potentially hold their genetic code hostage for political, social, or economic reasons. It may feel morbid to imagine a government holding a population hostage by threatening to make them all sterile, for example, but we had a grander intention in formulating these scenarios.

Throughout the entire research process, we continually met and discussed the importance of what we were studying and how we progressed with our findings. We feel that these innovations are inevitable, and that the technology will be available for many to use. We want to move forward to produce a report, one that defines the realistic potentials of genetic engineering and what we feel should be pursued as far as regulations and guidelines for its development. The scientific community is pursuing knowledge, not power, but it is up to the political community to determine what we desire in this pursuit of knowledge and what we feel is morally acceptable to do. Especially when we are quite literally programming life through an ever expanding understanding of the genetic language. We cannot stress enough that these innovations have the potential to unite us as human beings in a shared genomic history as we enter into an age of genetic revolution. But, it is too easy to forget the infancy of this science and the period of eugenics that sprung out of the idea that life was a string of information seeking to evolve to be better.

We can take this research and move forward to educate people and politicians and to engage scientists in a society-wide conversation about what we can do and what we should do. The second half of my summer focused on the practice of this final point. I spent the second half of the summer working for the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona: a non-profit organization that served twenty-one of the twenty-two federally recognized Native American tribes located in the Arizona territory. The ITCA serves a board of Native American Tribal Leaders and works on projects that range from water and energy resources, to public health and education, to voting and political rights issues. I worked for Mr. Travis L. Lane, who is the Assistant Director for the ITCA, and through him I engaged with the Executive

Director, Maria Dadgar, frequently and personally. The ITCA fosters an environment of inclusion and familial concern that I was quite surprised to find, and that helped me navigate my stay alone in Phoenix. The people I met there did work across the various departments of the ITCA, but many also served as tribal and spiritual leaders in their communities and their respective Reservations. Their friendship and sharing attitudes allowed me to become more educated and more invested in my work serving Native American communities every day. *(Summer continued on page 10)*



SUMMER DOUBLE FEATURE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

councilwomen, state Senators and representatives, local CEO's of organizations serving Native American communities, county election officers, and county recorders. Working with One Arizona, a partner organization, I coordinated the dates and locations for a Native Vote Strategy Planning Session. I wrote memos, letters, emails, and agendas for the meeting, reaching out to over forty members of tribal communities, county election institutions, and community organizations. With most of the correspondence being sent out under the name of the Executive Director, Maria Dadgar was very informed of my efforts but not involved. She was very impressed by my work ethic and invited me to aid in their Water and Energy Summit to get used to being the MC for a large meeting of Native American actors and leaders.

My Native Vote Strategy Planning Session was extremely successful. I had over fifty attendees and I hope to have provided a basis for the founding of a Native American Voting Block in Arizona. I was able to share my vision of a united political entity on the Reservations alongside of a corporation of Native American Tribes that could take advantage of the Federal laws supporting business while simultaneously directing and owning the development of society and energy technologies on their own territory. This would have the potential to service the entire Southwest for their energy consumption.



This summer was invaluable to me. I feel I was able to put into practice the skills and knowledge I have gained in my time as a student of Political Science. Skidmore fostered within me the ability to address issues with a unique and creative mindset, and simultaneously provided me with opportunities to put this new knowledge to work in the real world, melding my experience from learned information into practiced wisdom.

BRAZIL'S COMPLICATED POLITICAL CLIMATE

BARBARA CONTIN '19

I always experience culture shock when transitioning between Brazil and the United States. Brazil will always be my home- the place where I feel most comfortable. However, returning home for the summer between my sophomore and junior year was a different experience. The political climate at home impacted most of my interactions. Conversations I had with my relatives and friends were mostly about the current situation in our government. Everyone is either angry, terrified, or skeptical. The upcoming 2018 elections have everyone on edge. The political party that has been in office for over fourteen years, the Workers Party (PT) will likely be running with Luis Inacio Lula da Silva as their candidate. Lula was the Brazilian president for eight years and, despite being found guilty of corruption by the Brazilian Supreme Court, he still seems to be betting on legal loopholes to allow his candidacy. Currently, polls indicate that 30% of the population will endorse Lula in the upcoming election.



The runner up with sixteen percent of the popular vote is Jair Bolsonaro, running for the Social Christian Party (PSC). This candidate is in many ways the Brazilian Donald Trump, although he has far more political experience, which makes him a bigger threat to democracy. Bolsonaro has made a multitude of racist, homophobic, and sexist claims, but more shockingly he has claimed that the military dictatorship in Brazil was "wonderful."

Following Bolsonaro is Marina Silva with around fifteen percent of popular support. Marina's although an inspiring candidate, will likely lead an unsuccessful campaign, similar to her previous attempts in 2014 and 2010.

The situation is complicated and political arguments are not uncommon. It's hard to know where to stand politically because it seems that conversations about policy and ideology are irrelevant, and the focus is on the candidate. Nonetheless, as a political science major this motivates me to seek change - I want to be able to, at least in some way, contribute to political change in Brazil.

STUDENT NEWS

Collected by Alexis Cantor and Izzy Fischer

ALEXIS CANTOR '18: After spending my junior year abroad in Madrid through Skidmore in Spain, I am excited to be back on campus for my final year. This semester I am taking U.S. Presidency and Experimental Research, working for the department, and conducting research for Professor Mann.

AMY ROWLAND '19: This summer I had the wonderful opportunity to work at my local town hall! I was able to experience so many aspects of my town, from conducting radio tests with the police department, to attending meetings with regional municipalities, writing speeches and press releases for the First Selectman, and even helping plan the 4th of July fireworks. The experience left me feeling more acquainted with my town, and grateful for having witnessed such a well-functioning government.

ANTIGONE SCAPERDAS '19: This summer I did canvassing work for Jim Johnson's campaign during New Jersey's 2017 Gubernatorial primaries in June, and spent the rest of the summer working at Tarheel Total Pet Care.

CHLOE SINGER '18: This summer I worked for a cryptocurrency exchange company in the Boston area. Though it didn't have much to do with political science, it helped me understand the professional world, which will definitely help for senior year. After being abroad in Italy last semester, I'm happy to be back at Skidmore. I learned so much at my university in Roma and had great experiences, but nothing quite beats Skidmore.

DAVID GYAMPO '19: This summer, I interned at the African Leadership Academy (ALA) in Johannesburg where I worked as the procurement intern for their Global Programs department. I was given the challenge of managing a 5000 dollar budget in order to organize materials for teachers and students across seven consecutive summer programs being hosted on the campus. I also monitored invoices and purchase requisitions for the items that the department purchased.

DYLAN QUINN '18: This past summer I split my weeks working as a policy analyst for Phil Murphy's New Jersey gubernatorial campaign and as a Chief of Staff intern for the affordable housing non-profit HELP USA. Since it was my second summer on the Murphy campaign, I had the opportunity lead to their vote-by-mail initiative and work closely with campaign staffers.

ELIJAH BLISS '20: I spent my summer interning for Jeff Merkley, Oregon's junior Senator, at his office in Portland. I was amazed to see how grateful the Senator was for his interns, taking time out of a packed schedule to meet with us and talk about what it was like to be in his shoes. The internship gave me a reason to travel all around the great state of Oregon for Town Halls, rallies and meetings. I am grateful for all of the experiences and people I got to meet, especially the office staff who gave me invaluable advice from masters and law school to the little things we can do to make a change every day. I look forward to bringing this experience to campus while serving on SGA as Sophomore Class Senator and CHILLMORE (Late Night) Committee Chair this year.

HANNAH FISHMAN '19: I had planned to spend the year studying in Paris, France but, after working on a local judicial campaign for two months this summer, I decided to stay at Skidmore for the semester and postpone my studies in Paris until the spring. And though *le Joto n'est pas le Tour Eiffel*, I am very happy with the decision I made and can't wait to get out the vote in November!

HENRY JAFFE '18: I spent this past summer interning in the community affairs division of the New York City Comptroller's Office and taking the new NYC ferry service in my free time. It's great to be back for my senior year and to again see my friends who had disappeared for the spring semester. I'm taking Real Democracy and Constitutional Law this semester and spend most of my waking hours in the SGA office.

ISABELLE BERTOLOZZI '18: Over the summer I worked as a Public Health Inspector for the New York State Department of Health. I performed routine inspections on hotels, motels, beaches, pools and some food operations.

IZZY FISCHER '18: Last fall, I worked with Professor Mann in the design, implementation and analysis of a field experiment to increase the turnout of mail ballots in the state of North Carolina during the 2016 general election. This fall, I had the opportunity to travel to D.C. and present our findings at the Analyst Group's (a meeting of political analytics professionals and researchers) annual Get Out The Vote Conference. At this conference, I was one of many presenters who talked about persuasion and mobilization tactics tested in experiments during the 2016 general election.

STUDENT NEWS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

JACKSON PRICE '18: I was fortunate to spend this past summer working as an executive secretariat intern at the Peace Corps

headquarters in Washington D.C. I was tasked with drafting, monitoring, and archiving all correspondence and historical records for the director of the agency. In addition, my primary role was conducting research to assist the Executive Secretariat's digitization of their historical database. I have thoroughly enjoyed the start to the fall semester studying abroad in France. For the fall and spring semesters, I will continue my studies of European politics, French, and European history in Paris. I look forward to immersing myself in French culture, traveling across Europe, and watching European football. Taking a photographic film course next to the Bastille, speaking with the locals, and playing football on Monday nights are a few highlights from my study abroad experience so far. Go Pats!

JANE HUBER '19: I can't say my summer was super thrilling, but I am currently in Argentina studying human rights and social movements. The program is based out of Buenos Aires but we travel throughout the country. I have learned about the history of Argentina and the struggles and strength of the people here. I'm also acclimating to speaking Spanish full time! It's definitely a transition! Currently, we are in Patagonia learning from members of the Mapuche community about their fight to protect their territory. We are also learning about social environmentalism and how mining and petroleum companies are destroying the land and therefore displacing many people. I am meeting amazing people and having an amazing time learning about Argentina! Looking forward to seeing all the awesome people in PL when I get back!

JASON SUTHERLAND '18: I spent my summer in Washington D.C. observing the odd monkeys that we call politicians at work in their natural habitat. It was an experience which opened my eyes to the reality of political life, namely, that it is not real at all. It was frustrating to see how many people involved in politics in D.C. (including people my own age) are terribly out of touch with the thoughts and feelings of the average person. But, there was also a bright side to my experience. I left Washington with more confidence in my own instincts and a newfound sense for what political change I would like to take part in some day. Until that moment comes, I am happy to study in the Political Science department. It think it is best to keep learning new things.

JILLIAN SEIGEL '18: This summer I spent ten weeks in D.C. interning for a California Representative. I worked alongside staffers conducting research, attending briefings/functions, and corresponding with constituents from the district. It was such an interesting time to be in D.C. with the Trump Administration, and I even witnessed first-hand that there are admirable people working in U.S. politics!

JINAN AL-BUSAIDI '20: Over the summer, I was given the opportunity to intern at the National Museum in my home country, Oman. The internship allowed me to access an immense amount of information about the history and development of Oman throughout the years. One of my tasks included being an instructor for the Museum's annual summer camp, targeted towards its visitors and their children. The camp plays a great role in relaying Oman's cultural heritage to the younger generation of the local community.

KIRA GEARY '18: This summer, I worked at a strategic communications firm called SKDKnickerbocker. I wrote strategic memos, op-eds, and press releases, and helped in developing campaign messaging for a Democratic congressional Candidate in NY's 21st District. I'm happy to be back at Skidmore this year as I was abroad last semester! This year I'm the VP for Financial Affairs for SGA, so I will be spending most of my time doing work for that and doing research for my senior thesis.

MATTHEW SIMKOWITZ '19: This past summer, I worked at a renewable energy development company called Energiya Global in Jerusalem, Israel! I performed policy research on legal frameworks for project development in various sub-Saharan African countries, and wrote research papers on specific countries detailing the viability of said countries for future renewable energy projects. I also wrote a lesson plan/grant proposal for a training course aimed at Palestinian engineers who might be interested in operating a 5 MW solar plant in the West Bank that is currently being constructed by the company I worked for! I also spent several Saturday evenings in Area A of the West Bank as part of a swing dancing class in Bethlehem, where I made several Palestinian friends and learned a substantial amount about the conflict and its complexities and nuances.

NIGEL SMITH '19: Over the summer, I interned with the Georgia Power Company, the largest subsidiary of the Southern Company, which is a Fortune 500 company and the second largest utility company in the United States. There, I spent time exploring their Risk Management and Legal Services Department while also gaining exposure to the External and Legislative Affairs aspect of the energy sector. While interning, I also had the opportunity to participate in the Stacey Abrams gubernatorial campaign in Georgia, who may make history as the first African-American female to hold the governor's office in Georgia. Aside from these things, I got a chance to vacation in Costa Rica and practice my Spanish as I gear up to immerse myself in the language via the Skidmore in Spain program during Spring 2018.

NOSHEEN HOTAKI '18: The beginning of summer, I did a residential program called New Leadership New York with the Center for Women in Government and Civil Society in Albany. I then went to University of Wisconsin in Madison, where I attended intermediate and advanced Hindi classes at the University's South Asian Summer Language Institute (SASLI). Professor Biberman did the same program when she was acquiring her PhD.

OLIVIA COX '18: Over the summer I served as one of the coordinators for Schenectady Inner City Ministry's Free Summer Meals Program, the largest USDA sponsored summer feeding program in the capital district. I managed over 30 employees and over 1,000 volunteers, and facilitated the distribution of almost 500 meals daily via our mobile meal trucks and fixed sites. My summer job and studying abroad in Paris have inspired me to write a senior thesis comparing the policies and efficacies of government sponsored school feeding programs in Europe and the United States.

RACHEL MCPHERSON '19: This summer, I went to two conferences as a representative for Turning Point USA. I was able to hear from President Trump, Vice President Pence, Paul Ryan, Kellyanne Conway, and many more conservative speakers. I am currently spending my fall semester in Germany, where I was able to see Angela Merkel on her campaign trail, and recently found out that I will also be spending my spring semester in Washington, D.C. at American University.

RACHAEL THOMEER '18: I spent the summer interning for NY Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. I got to talk to constituents, do research, and help with events. It was a valuable personal and educational experience and I really enjoyed the work! This semester I will be studying the 2017 Saratoga Springs City Council Election, specifically voter representation and the Charter review process. I'm also excited to be working as the Peer Mentor for Professor Turner's Real Democracy seminar!

YIREN LYU '19: Since last summer I've been working with an independent media cooperative project based in China, for which I've translated and edited articles and commentaries on social movements and alternative economics. I'm wondering how many people are interested in forming a left book group for anyone who's interested in left-wing theories and activism, classical and contemporary emancipatory philosophy, and related fields like psychoanalysis and heterodox economics.

ZACHARY ALTMAN '19: This past summer I worked as a communications intern and constituent services intern in the Office of New York City Council Member Ben Kallos. The work was gratifying because it affirmed my belief that politics is best exerted at the local level. When I wasn't working, I was reading. Here are two books that I highly recommend: *The Holocaust as History and Warning* by Timothy Snyder and *The Art of Power* by Jon Meacham.

SGA IS LOCAL POLITICS

HENRY JAFFE '18 AND RACHAEL THOMEER '18

"We are the representatives of the student body and to them we give our service". This is the last line of the SGA senate invocation, which is read every week to start the meeting. Rachael and I have been on SGA for several years. Rachael got involved at the beginning of freshman year as Class Secretary, and I joined my sophomore year as Wilmarth Senator. We have continued to be involved and we now serve on the Executive Committee; I as the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Rachael as the Senior Class President. I joined SGA after tagging along behind Rachael when she went to Senate my sophomore year in an attempt to put off my homework. I was successful, and have been putting off my homework in the name of student governance ever since. Henry '18

SGA has been the defining factor of my Skidmore experience and has significantly shaped the person I've become in the last three and a half years. I am so thankful for the experiences, lessons and friends that I have had along the way. It sounds really cheesy, but it's true. Rachael '18

All politics are local, and that doesn't end with Saratoga Springs. In SGA we have dealt with the student, faculty and administrative politics that dictate what happen, when it happens, and how it happens. We have a lot of autonomy to make decisions and positively impact student life. And we get to apply the abstract concepts and theories we learn in class while doing something that isn't directly academic.

Sayre's law states that "[Small scale] politics is the most vicious and bitter form of politics, because the stakes are so low." This non-intuitive rule is not the case with SGA. We know the stakes aren't nearly as high as real local or state governments, but the relatively small stakes have not translated into bitterness and resentment. Many of us are each other's best friends and some of our fondest memories here are from SGA.

If you have any comments or suggestions for SGA stop by the SGA office on the first floor of Case or e-mail rthomeer@skidmore.edu or hjaffe@skidmore.edu and if you want to join (something we highly recommend) fill out the Willingness to Serve form on SkidSync: <http://tinyurl.com/JoinSkidSGA>

ALUMNI UPDATES

COLLECTED BY PROFESSOR YELENA BIBERMAN-OCAKLI AND PROFESSOR FERYAZ OCAKLI

Marcella Jewell '15



Marcella with Hillary Clinton

I have had a few gigs since graduating almost three years ago. I ran a tech startup right out of school and now work at a management consulting firm that specializes in sustainability. My most fulfilling job since graduation was working on the Hillary for America campaign. I started out as an organizer for the New Hampshire primary in October 2015. From there, I traveled to Maine, Indiana, North Dakota, and then back to Indiana as the State Director for the general election.

MARCELLA'S WITH HER!

I was able to meet so many awe-inspiring volunteers and elected officials. I worked an average of 10-12 hour days, 7 days a week, for exactly 390 days, but it was worth every minute to experience our democracy in action.



STUDYING HISTORY IN LONDON



After graduating from Skidmore, I spent a year-and-a-half at the Boston office of Brown Brothers Harriman, a private custodian bank that works mostly with large asset managers. My position there marked a deviation from my Political Science studies, although it was interesting to see how world events, such as Brexit, actually impacted financial institutions from within the industry.

This fall, I left Brown Brothers Harriman to pursue a dual MA/MSc in International and World History at Columbia University and the London School of Economics.

Andrew Shi '15

A few weeks into the program, I am heavily relying on the critical and analytical thinking skills I developed as a Political Science major to appraise academic literature and study past events, trends, data, and documentation. The true virtue of the Political Science major is that those critical and analytical thinking skills our professors and panels of alumni advertised—promotional talk to which I admittedly paid little heed as an undergraduate—are indeed the foremost skills that will allow you to successfully navigate successfully the job market in the future, regardless of the unique path you choose. And the subject matter itself is essential to many diverse industries that might not initially come to mind, such as consulting, finance, or journalism.

JOINED A TECH STARTUP IN SAN FRANCISCO

Emma Xuxu Marshall, '16



After I graduated from Skidmore, I moved to San Francisco, CA, for a position in the tech industry. I am currently a Senior Associate at GLG, a tech-enabled platform that connects top professionals with the expertise they need to make informed strategic and operational decisions. In this role, I work

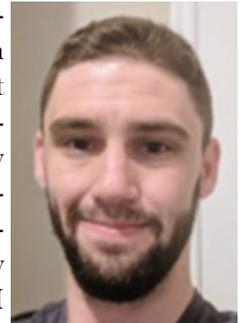
directly with our Software and Hardware enterprise clients to help them solve critical problems and service their management consulting and market research needs. This is accomplished primarily through a variety of different product and service offerings (consultations, strategic projects, surveys, etc). In many ways, my experience with the broader liberal arts community at Skidmore equipped me with the fundamental tools to navigate this new industry and post-grad world. However, it is the Government (now Political Science) major in particular which has taught me how to be agile in approach and dynamic in application.

Jacob Nathan '15

FROM BBQ TO LAW SCHOOL

After graduating from Skidmore, I moved to Chicago and began working on the MAPSCorps project at the University of Chicago Survey Lab. Several months later, I accepted a job as the driver for a local start-up barbecue chain - Blackwood BBQ. I didn't expect to remain at Blackwood for more than a few months, but, to my great surprise, I found a way to make my work interesting enough to justify getting up at 4:00am every morning. By going above and beyond (admittedly low) expectations, I was able to take on more engaging problems than the best way to fit 2,000 pounds of meat into a utility van. That said, I knew I was not going to spend my life in the restaurant industry. So I took a couple of months off of work to study for the LSAT. I worked incredibly hard, did well, and was ultimately offered significant scholarships at four law schools.

I accepted Ohio State's offer, rejected a promotion to Transportation Manager at Blackwood, and spent my last few months in Chicago winding down my role at the company and helping to train a new Transportation Manager and several new drivers. I moved to Columbus in July and began classes on August 21st. I will not describe law school itself, lest



I write a boring book in the process, but suffice it to say that I spend most of every day reading about the law. I owe thanks to a former Skidmore professor, Helen Knowles, whose course on Constitutional Law inspired me to embark on this journey. I thank her and all of my government professors for teaching me, among many other things, that the hardest work is the most rewarding.

PROTECTING OUR COUNTRY

Orr Genish, '17



I am now 2nd Lt and was just recently commissioned from the Air Force's Office Training School. Currently, I am located at NAS Pensacola, Florida, for my two-year training program to become a Navigator/Combat Systems Operator. This training will involve going to Flight School, Survival School, and then an additional

year in different planes learning the trade. Skidmore's Political Science Department had a large part in preparing me to be successful in this career, as it requires you to be a creative and critical thinker with whatever you are presented. After my training is complete, I will be assigned a plane, anything from an F-15E, B-52 bomber, to an AC-130 Special Operations gunship, and be sent anywhere around the world. I can honestly say that, without Skidmore, I wouldn't have been prepared for the challenges that I have faced so far, and am incredibly grateful for the professors in the Political Science Department for their mentorship and friendship.

TRANSLATING FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

Saleem Mohamed '15



for opportunities in the Department of Public Information and was offered the position of a translator in the United Nations Webcast, which is where I currently work. As a Skidmore graduate with a Political Science major, I wanted to contribute to the work of the United Nations. It has been a smooth transition to the UN, where I attend many conferences similar to those I attended during my semester in Washington (as part of the Washington Semester Program).

After graduating from Skidmore, I first worked as a paralegal in a small law firm in New York City. The firm mainly focused on immigration cases. My duties involved filling visa and citizenship applications, as well as translating for and assisting Arabic-speaking clients. I received an offer from the United Nations three months later for an internship as a journalist with the Arabic Radio at the UN headquarters. I was eager to explore a career in media, and worked with the radio for about three months. I attended conferences and met many people from various fields, including Media, Law, and Economic & Social Development. Afterwards, I applied



Saleem with former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

Effrosyni (Frini) Chantzi, '17

WRITING THE DEMOCRACY DIGEST



Immediately after graduation, I interned at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) as an Assistant Program Officer in Washington, DC. I worked for the Government Relations and Public Affairs Department. NED is a private, non-profit, non-governmental, bipartisan foundation that supports the growth of democracy abroad through non-governmental efforts. My responsibilities included conducting research and supporting the communication, development, and advocacy functions of the organization. I attended events on Capitol Hill and witnessed fiery debates focused on foreign and domestic policymaking. I also wrote a report for NED's online platform called Democracy Digest on a Senate hearing. The hearing aimed to identify external threats to US interests and re-

focus attention to Southeastern Europe by evaluating current trends of US policy, specifically with regard to Russian interventionism, the renewal of nationalistic sentiments, and the political instability that threatens Southeastern Europe's democratic institutions.

HELPING CHILDREN IN THE U.S. AND BEYOND

Rachel Castellano, '16

I am currently the Program Coordinator at StolenYouth, a Seattle-based non-profit that works to inspire action, generate funding, and build and invest in coalitions to end child sex trafficking in WA State. The StolenYouth coalition consists of five organizations that approach this issue from different angles. They provide services for survivors, trainings for hoteliers about trafficking, curriculum for educating business owners and students, technologies that target buyers and disrupt the sale of children, and a program for rehabilitating buyers. My experience as a Political Science major has continued to influence me after my time at Skidmore. I was fortunate to have co-authored an academic article with Professor Yelena Biberman and am proud to report that "Genocidal Violence, Nation-Building, and the Birth of Bangladesh" was published in *Asian Security* in June.

In addition to the opportunity to research and travel to Bangladesh, studying Political Science was crucial to developing my ability to critically analyze complex issues from multiple different angles.



Rachel with Paulina Phelps '16 at Stolen Youth's luncheon fundraiser

PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL

Corinna Goodman, '16



Corinna with Meryl Streep

I spent the summer after graduation studying Arabic in Morocco through the Critical Language Scholarship. I then started working as a paralegal at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, a large corporate law firm. I feel much more passionate about public interest law than I do about corporate law, but thankfully

Weil is heavily invested

in pro bono work, and there are a lot of opportunities to help. I am currently involved with the Innocence Project, a non-profit legal organization that exonerates wrongly convicted prison inmates through DNA testing and aims to reform the criminal justice system. Weil assists the Innocence Project with its backlog of case files that have yet to be reviewed. This past spring, I had the opportunity to attend their 25th Anniversary Gala,

which was exciting and inspiring. The event featured speakers such as Andrew Cuomo and Meryl Streep, as well as a letter written to the Innocence Project by former President Barack Obama. Looking back, my experiences in the Skidmore Political Science Department have played an important role in my career decision: a constitutional law class I took in the (then) Government Department as well as a class on Terrorism and International Law in the International Affairs Department initially sparked my interest in law. In addition, my focus on politics and culture in the Middle East has provided me with invaluable background knowledge for pursuing my next goal: becoming an immigration lawyer focused on human rights.



Corinna in Morocco

THE POLITICS OF THE FORGOTTEN AND THE AGGRIEVED: REMAKING THE WORLD ORDER?

Political Science majors Ricky Rios and Jason Sutherland
will represent our department as delegates at

The 69th Annual Student Conference on U. S. Affairs
The United States Military Academy, West Point, NY
November 1 - 4, 2017

SPRING 2018 TOPICS COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PL 251A: RACE, STATE AND POWER

Professor Kate Graney

In this class, we explore how constructions of racial identity have been used by political elites, economic elites and ordinary people in three different places—the US, South Africa, and Brazil—to construct, contest and reform their nation-states. We examine the concept of race theoretically, interrogate the roots of racist states structures during the era of European colonialism, and trace the development and (partial and fragile) dismantling of those structures through social movements and political / legal reform, through a combination of primary and secondary historical and contemporary sources.



PL 251B: INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTIONS AND POST-CONFLICT POLITICS

Professor Megan Turnbull

Violent political conflicts, such as the civil wars in Syria, Yemen, and South Sudan, have caused enormous human suffering and undermine global security. What can international actors do to prevent and resolve such conflicts? What are the prospects for the consolidation of state authority once these conflicts end? This course examines the key issues faced by policy-makers in international conflict management: preventing escalation, mediating and enforcing peace agreements, military intervention, protecting refugees and providing humanitarian relief, and state-building in war-torn societies.



The course is divided into three parts. The first section offers a brief history of civil conflict, state violence, and conflict management practices at the end of the Cold War. In the second part of the course, we will examine how these practices have evolved in recent years, paying particular attention to international mediation, humanitarian relief, refugee crisis management, peacekeeping, and military interventions. The final section will consider past and current approaches to strengthening state capacity and legitimacy as countries emerge from years of horrific violence.

Throughout the course, we will draw on case studies from Rwanda, Kosovo, Bosnia, Cambodia, Northern Ireland, and Somalia. We will also pay careful attention to current conflicts in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria, and Myanmar. By the end of the course, students will have a firm understanding of the main approaches to international conflict management, their track record of success and their limitations, and the ethical dilemmas faced by policy-makers, domestic actors, and the international community.

PL 351B: THE POLITICS OF DYSTOPIA: TYRANNY IN 20TH CENTURY LITERATURE

Professor Flagg Taylor

This course is devoted to a close study of portraits of tyranny and unfreedom in twentieth century literature. The totalitarian experiments of the twentieth century combined with dramatic advances in technology seemed to spawn new thinking about what shape future tyrannies might take. Would future political and social experiments bring about dystopian results due to their perverse or merely unrealistic ambitions? Or might our technological capacities allow such political engineers to succeed all too well? Does human nature place limits on what political and social reformers can accomplish? Or might it now be possible to transform and shape human nature itself such that the political and social orders of the future will be entirely and dramatically new? We will examine these and related questions by reading authors such as George Orwell, Arthur Koestler, Aldous Huxley, C. S. Lewis, Kurt Vonnegut, Walker Percy, and Kazuo Ishiguro.

**PL351B: THE FEDERALIST: THE FIGHT FOR RATIFICATION**

Professor Natalie Taylor



The Federalist is the essential text for understanding the singular character of the American republic. On September 17, 1787 the Constitutional Convention concluded its work on the Constitution and forwarded it to the states for ratification. An intense national debate on the size and scope of government and the nature of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers got underway. The defense of the new Constitution offered by James Madison, John Jay, and Alexander Hamilton in *The Federalist* provides the theoretical underpinnings of the American government. In addition to being political theorists, Madison, Jay, and Hamilton were astute politicians. They understood the rhythms and nuances of the ratification process and responded to the anti-federalist arguments against the Constitution. This course will examine both the philosophical foundations of the new republic and the politics of the Federalists' fight for ratification.

PL365: DEMOCRATIC EROSION IN THE AGE OF TRUMP

Professor Megan Turnbull

Since Donald Trump's election last November, Americans have been inundated with warnings that our new president represents a unique threat to the quality and longevity of democracy in America. Democratic Erosion is a cross-university collaborative course that aims to help students critically and systematically evaluate the risks to democracy both here and abroad through the lens of theory, history, and social science. During the 2017-18 academic year, faculty at over a dozen universities are teaching elements from the same syllabus at the same time. Students at all participating universities collaborate on a number of assignments, and are expected to engage not only with their own classmates, but with students at other universities as well.



Importantly, the course is not intended as a partisan critique of Donald Trump, or of any other politician or political party. Our goal is to treat the threat of democratic erosion as an empirical question, rather than merely a political one. Is American democracy really under threat? What about democracy in the West, or the world, more generally? If democracy is indeed under threat, what can we do about it? And if it's not under threat, why are so many of us so worried that it is? This course aims to help answer these questions. For more information, please visit the course website: <http://democratic-erosion.com/>

PL 367: POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY- THEORIES AND REALITIES

Professor Mara Suttman-Lea



Political campaigns are the primary means through which American citizens actively engage with their political system. This course begins with a conceptual examination of American democracy reviewing its cultural and constitutional foundations and asking the question: how should social scientists measure and evaluate the democratic character of American politics? The course emphasizes three central dimensions of democratic theory: *representation*, *information*, and *engagement* and engages students with basic social science practices for assessing empirical outcomes on these dimensions. Using this conceptual foundation, the remainder of the course introduces students to a range of substantive topics through the lens of the strategic decisions made by political campaigns with the aim of teaching students how to think critically about the role of campaigns in American politics. Specifically, it encourages them to think about the relationship between the realities of campaigning in the United States and political actors, institutions, and citizens. These topics include congress and

the presidency, the political behavior of American citizens, the role of political parties, the media, and interests groups, as well as Federalism and the legal institutions that structure American politics. For their final project, students will be asked to design their own campaign strategy and assess its democratic merit on the basis of how well their decisions promote representation, inform citizens, and engage them in the political process.

SPRING 2018 — WHAT COUNTS FOR WHAT?

AMERICAN POLITICS	POLITICAL THEORY	INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	COMPARATIVE POLITICS
PL 225: Politics and News Media	PL 205H: Modern Political Thought	PL 251B: International Interventions and Post Conflict Politics	PL 223: Political Islam
PL 231: Environmental Politics and Policy	PL 351B- 001: Politics of Dystopia: Tyranny in 20th Century Literature	PL 357: Sexing Global Politics: Gender and International Relations	PL 251A: Race, State and Power
PL 252: The Psychology of Politics	PL 351B- 002: The FEDERALIST: The Fight for Ratification		PL 365: Democratic Erosion in the Age of Trump
PL 315: Immigration Politics and Policy			
PL 336: Voting in the US: Access, Fairness and Reform			
PL 362: Politics of Congress			
PL 367: Political Campaigns & American Democracy—Theories and Democracy			

SPRING 2018 — POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSE OFFERINGS

PL-101-001	Intro to American Politics	Suttman-Lea, Mara	M W F	12:20PM - 1:15PM
PL-101-002	Intro to American Politics	Zuber, Katherine	T R	6:30PM — 7:50PM
PL-102-001	Intro to Political Philosophy	Taylor, Natalie	M W F	10:10AM —11:05AM
PL-103 001	Intro to Comp/Intl Politics	Ocakli, Feryaz	T R	8:10AM—9:30AM
PL-103 002	Intro Comp/Intl Politics	Turnbull, Megan	T R	9:40AM- 11:00AM
PL-205H 001	Modern Political Thought	Taylor, Frank	W F	12:20PM — 1:40PM
PL-225 001	Politics and News Media	Mann, Christopher	T R	12:40PM — 2:00PM
PL-231 001	Environmental Politics and Policy	Turner, Robert	T R	9:40AM — 11:00AM
PL-233 001	Political Islam	Ocakli, Feryaz	T R	11:10AM —12:30PM
PL-251A 001	Race, State and Power	Graney, Katherine	W F	8:40AM - 10:00AM
PL-251B 001	International Interventions and Post-Conflict Politics	Turnbull, Megan	T R	3:40PM — 5:00PM
PL-252 001	The Psychology of Politics	Seyb, Ronald	T R	11:10AM —12:30PM
PL-315 001	Immigration Politics and Policy	Turner, Robert	T R	3:40PM — 5:00PM
PL-336 001	Voting in the US: Access, Fairness and Reform	Mann, Christopher	T R	9:10AM — 11:00AM
PL-351B 001	The Politics of Dystopia: Tyranny in 20 th Century Literature	Taylor, Frank	M W	2:30PM — 3:50PM
PL-351B 002	The Federalist: The Fight For Ratification	Taylor, Natalie	T R	2:10PM — 3:30PM
PL-357 001	Sexing Global Politics: Gender and International Relations	Graney, Katherine	M W F	11:15AM —12:10PM
PL-362 001	Politics of Congress	Suttman-Lea, Mara	M W F	1:25PM- 2:20PM
PL-365 001	Democratic Erosion in the Age of Trump	Turnbull, Megan	T R	12:40PM - 2:00PM
PL-367 001	Political Campaigns and American Democracy — Theories and Realities	Suttman-Lea, Mara	W F	10:10AM-11:30PM