“Student Research Partners gain valuable experience that enhances their academic life at Carleton and prepares them for both careers and graduate school.”

SUSANNAH OTTAWAY
Professor of History
Former Director of the Humanities Center
2019-2020 STUDENT RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Summer Break 2019

Guapo Banuelos '20 | Assistant Professor Charisse Burden-Stelly
Aaron Forman '21 | Assistant Professor Alex Knodell
Ricardo Garcia '21 | Associate Professor Anita Chikkatur
Anna Grove '21 | Professor Mike Flynn
Jacob Isaacs '20 | Postdoctoral Fellow Daniel Picus
Katerina Katakalides '20 | Assistant Professor Charisse Burden-Stelly
Isabel McFadden '20 | Assistant Professor Jake Morton
Patrick Mullins '20 | Assistant Professor Jake Morton
Gabe Nass '21 | Assistant Professor Jake Morton
Ben Perry '22 | Professor Barbara Allen
Jack Schill '21 | Professor Barbara Allen
Sam Wege '22 | Assistant Professor Alex Knodell
Read Wilder '20 | Professor Bill North
Owen Yager '20 | Associate Professor Asuka Sango
Alex Zhai '20 | Professor Mike Flynn

Winter Break 2018

Henry Brown '22 | Associate Professor Palmar Álvarez-Blanco
Nicholas Ford '21 | Associate Professor Andrew Flory
Anne Hackman '19 | Professor Nancy Cho
Jack Hardwick '19 | Assistant Professor Andrea Mazzariello
Jean LaFontaine '19 | Visiting Assistant Professor Elena McGrath
Ishmael Maxwell '21 | Associate Professor Dev Gupta
Zoe Pharo '21 | Associate Professor Dev Gupta
Jenni Rogan '19 | Associate Professor George Vrtis
Fernando Saldivia Yanez '20 | Instructor Cecilia Cornejo
Margot Shaya '21 | Visiting Assistant Professor Megan Sarno
Irene Stoutland '21 | Professor Kelly Connole
Read Wilder '20 | Professor William North
Alan Zheng '20 | Instructor Cecilia Cornejo
INTRODUCTION FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am delighted and humbled to introduce this booklet that showcases the inspiring work done by our Student Research Partners (SRPs) during the summer and winter breaks of 2019. These awards enable students to work closely with faculty members on substantive research projects for their mutual benefit.

SKILLS GAINED:
In their work as SRPs, students engage in traditional research methods, such as:
• reading and editing scholarly work; interpreting primary sources; and establishing bibliographic materials
• formulating ideas and hypotheses
• translating foreign languages
• participating in ethnographic interviews
• doing digital mapping, film editing, and website design and construction
• creating video games for museum exhibits
• traveling to archives or archaeological sites

HUMANISTIC PERPSPECTIVES GAINED:
The research projects highlighted in this book tell stories about the deeper significance of the humanities at Carleton and beyond, including:
• grappling with profound ethical questions
• struggling to interpret complicated histories
• telling stories with empathy and attention to context
• analyzing institutions and their diverse effects on people, and
• imagining past worlds for the sake of present understanding.

CAREER PATHS EXPLORED:
These skills and insights are crucial for distinguished success in graduate school, and for fields such as healthcare, law, education, public policy, nonprofit community service, and corporate leadership.

SRPs are the centerpiece of the Humanities Center’s commitment to engaging students in the practice of humanistic research. Through this program, the Center has been able to fund 218 students since its inception in 2009. Thanks to the generosity of Alison von Klemperer ’82, who first funded SRPs in 2013 and who has continued to support the program up to today, along with other alumni donors, Carleton’s Humanities Center has a truly distinguished program of undergraduate research training in the humanities.

Please enjoy the following selected in-depth portraits of student research from summer 2019 and winter break 2018. Thank you for your support and interest!

LORI PEARSON
Professor of Religion
David and Marian Adams Bryn-Jones Distinguished Teaching Professor of the Humanities
Dakota Project: Linguistic Fieldwork in Lake Traverse Reservation

The trip to Lake Traverse reservation this summer was a continuation of the Dakota Project, a long term partnership between the Carleton Linguistics department and the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Dakotah Language Institute (SWODLI). During this trip, Professor Flynn, fellow SRP Anna Grove, and I aimed to collect data from native speakers in order to answer several outstanding questions about the language’s phonemic inventory. Specifically, we were looking for features such as word-initial aspiration and glottal stops in vowel initial words. We were able to conduct a linguistic interview with Mr. Clifford Canku, one of the around 40 remaining native speakers of the language.

During the trip, we were able to tour the tribal school in the reservation. It was very powerful seeing the tribal high school doing everything they can to preserve their language: from offering Dakota classes to writing room signs around the campus in Dakota. When we were meeting with a group of high school teachers, one teacher mistook us as new recruits at the school. After explaining to him we were here to research and document the language, he encouraged us to come back and teach: “We need all the help we can get.”

After graduation, I plan on continuing linguistics research in graduate school. Prior to my SRP experience, I had taken a class on Field Methods, but never had the opportunity to work directly with speakers on language documentation. This SRP experience provided me the opportunity to put the skills I learned in class to practice, and I look forward to developing them more in the future.
SMALL CYCLADIC ISLANDS PROJECT

I worked on the Small Cycladic Islands Project (SCIP) inaugural field season in the Little Cyclades of the Aegean Sea. A new survey archaeology project, SCIP focused on questions of large-scale networks and occupation patterns in the Aegean. The findings of our project, include: data largely narrowing periods of occupation; identifiable occupation patterns reliant upon resource accessibility including water, soil quality, and mineral resources; different resource manipulation and exploitation correlating with different periods of occupation; and data both supporting and contradicting existing previous research. These all contribute to concentrating the questions and goals that will be pursued in our future field seasons.

The most interesting experience I had was working in the museum’s lab with an archaeologist and pottery identification expert, Denitsa Nenova, to identify and analyze finds. Most of the finds analyzed were sherds, or small fractured pieces of pottery, collected from the previous day. From any given sherd, we were able to determine the technique, texture, shape, function, and potential creation/use dates. Trying to discern so much information from such a small piece of data with little indicating factors forced us to take account precisely of every detail available to us. I found this to be exceptionally interesting because every new sherd was its own puzzle that could only be solved by taking into account both the trends followed by all pottery and the features that make the sherd unique.

My work both in the lab and in the field this summer allowed me to be surrounded by experts in all disciplines relevant to the inherently multi-disciplinary field that is archaeology. In the lab, aiding in pottery and lithics analysis gave me an opportunity to learn invaluable skills in identifying artistic style through pottery creation techniques, thereby allowing me to extrapolate the time period which that style indicates. In the field, the constant search for features gave me plentiful opportunities to work with professional archaeologists to look for patterns indicating relevant information about when or in what manner the land was used. These interactions taught me skills and techniques, which would take multiple full classes to teach outside of the field, in just a few weeks.

Working with Professor Knodell helped give me a clear window into the actual world of archaeology because his manner of teaching allowed me to do the actual work that archaeologists; from participating in the fieldwork as an active member of the team to helping with administrative work in the lab, the responsibilities assigned to us were the same as those that professional archaeologists would take on. Because of this, I was able to have a wholly authentic learning experience.
AARON FORMAN ’21
with Assistant Professor Alex Knodell

Small Cycladic Islands Project
Our project researched material culture on small islands near the larger island of Paros, Greece. We hoped to produce a dataset that encompassed the results of our daily survey, gridded collection, and featured recording groups. In addition, we washed, processed, and photographed pottery and lithics that we discovered on the islands.

One interesting experience I had was the first piece of obsidian I found on the island of Filizi. I knew how important obsidian is to archaeological research because we found several pieces on Tsimintiri and Drionisi. However, I was really proud of myself when I identified and collected fragments on Filizi, as they corroborated evidence of human occupation in the Southern part of the island.

I improved my survey identification skills and my ability to analyze and photograph pottery and lithics in the lab. I also developed skills in drone photography and photogrammetry. Finally, through conversation with experts in archaeology, my ability to think about the world like an archaeologist expanded tremendously and I was able to consider the archaeological sites I visited after the project ended from a more scholarly perspective.

To transport our survey gear to Filizi, we purchased a large inflatable peacock, whom we named Alberto, upon which we placed our backpacks and archaeological survey utensils. After safely transporting Alberto to the island with all of our gear intact and dry, Professor Knodell was very happy and put his arms in the air in a celebratory pose. Throughout the project I was able to learn more about Professor Knodell as a human being and his life experiences that led him to becoming an archaeologist.

Members of the team after a day of fieldwork on Dryonis.
Language was powerful in Ancient Judaism. This is apparent in the wide array of healing incantations that survive alongside more familiar institutionalized practices. These “magical” texts offer ways to effect material change through language. Magic, rather than existing outside tradition, reflects broader cultural trends alongside the endemic practices of “mainstream” Judaism. Through a review of the corpus of late ancient Jewish magic, informed by contemporary theories of language, we documented the specific ways in which these texts act on the world. Selection of words, context, audience, execution, and purpose all play substantial roles in determining material effects.

I learned about the nature and classification of magic—how it differs and is similar to other forms of religious practice. In many cases, what separates magic from other practices is little more than institutionalization. Many familiar Jewish practices in my own life derive from some of the magical traditions we studied in this project.

I think the most meaningful insight I had during this project was the realization that many of my own Jewish practices come from magical traditions. The hamsa necklace I wear, the mezuzah at my house, and the everyday prayers I recite all come from these magical traditions. Daniel and I talked about this subject one day and, to my surprise, he confirmed their magical origins. From that moment on, I began to understand how magic might function—not as a literal, direct reshaping of reality but a personal practice that tethers one to a tradition. The material logic of magic made sense in a way I never expected it to.

As an English major, I was pleasantly surprised this summer to find that much of my summer religion research engaged theoretical issues I think about already: the power of language, the relationship between text and meaning, and the interplay between written word and spoken word. These discussions will prepare me for my future work in literary studies, at Carleton and beyond.

Babylonian incantation bowls, like the one pictured here from the fourth to seventh century CE, constitute one of the largest corpuses of ancient Jewish magical artifacts. These bowls invoked the religious authority of sacred texts, higher powers, and other symbols of spiritual authority, often with the goal of trapping demons.
Examining the Reformed Druids of North America

We sought to examine and position the Reformed Druids of North America, a religious protest movement that arose at Carleton in the 1960s, as a historical movement that served different roles for different people and continues to do so. In the process, we interviewed multiple former and current Druids and found that the movement has many purposes ranging from (1) a simple protest, (2) an addendum to other religious traditions, to (3) a wholly sufficient religious tradition. We also found that this seems to be a factor of its time, as secular and pluralistic cultural changes were sweeping across the United States.

I interviewed some fascinating people, including several prominent Archdruids from the 1960s and 70s. Not only did this add real heft to our research, it also allowed me a window into an entirely different era on Carleton’s campus. In many ways, that catalyzed reflection on my Carleton experience. I also had the opportunity to read secondary scholarship on American pluralism and secularism that will directly impact my thought processes as I begin to write my comps; this Druidic research will be feeding directly into my other academic pursuits at Carleton.

As a result of a relationship built over the course of the academic year, during my tenure as a student in Professor Sango’s “Understanding Religion” class, I was fairly free to shape this research myself, reporting what I found to Professor Sango through weekly meetings and shared Google Docs of notes. This was terrific, I found, in that it let me have a large, free-wheeling research project to explore while also being supported by a professor who could guide me if I veered off course.
Anti-Blackness and Anti-Communism During The McCarthy “Era”

Our research explored anti-Communist laws and discourses that encouraged the initial growth and expansion of federal surveillance during the late-19th to mid-20th century. By studying how the federal executive branch expanded its surveillance efforts during the 20th century, especially in relationship to anxieties stemming from international warfare and the spread of Bolshevism, we uncovered how such structures were used to weaken and destroy radical race and labor organizations.

We were fortunately able to mine the archives at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture located in Harlem, NYC. Digging through the stacks and engaging with primary sources allowed us the privilege to see how Black Marxists, themselves targeted by the aforementioned structures, understood clearly that anti-communist sentiments were being weaponized against Black radicals to prevent international solidarity across the African diaspora.

Not only did I learn how to comfortably engage with an evolving research question, but I gained valuable experience “reading” an archive with that question in mind. This experience also helped me to understand how professors produce knowledge, particularly regarding how one begins with a question and then ends up with a manuscript.

Working with Professor Burden-Stelly was nothing short of an amazing experience. She is an exemplar of an erudite, hardworking, and dedicated scholar. Capturing a glimpse of her zeal for the material helped me to appreciate the intellectual stakes behind the work that we do in the humanities in a new way, and solidified my decision to pursue a Ph.D. after Carleton.
Anti-Blackness and Anti-Communism During the McCarthy “Era”

Throughout the summer, I spent time researching the McCarthy Era, and specifically, “The McCarthyist Structure of Feeling,” which involves the relationship between anti-radicalism, anti-communism, and anti-blackness from 1919-1971. This relationship, which was built on a foundation created by J. Edgar Hoover and Joseph McCarthy, allowed these notions of American v. un-American and radical/subversive v. citizen to be used as reasons to discredit the civil rights movement. However, the question then becomes, how were Hoover and McCarthy able to develop the “McCarthy Structure of Feeling” and position it as a foundational structure in US society during the 20th century?

The most interesting experience during my research experience occurred while I was doing archival research at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. While at the Schomburg, I was able to dive into Claudia Jones’ FBI files, which included her Security Index card, deportation records, and prosecutorial summary. Since I found these files towards the end of my research, it was so fascinating to have the final piece of the puzzle. I was finally able to complete the roadmap of her surveillance, arrest, and deportation.

My organization skills became much more refined throughout this summer, especially at the Schomburg Center. Going through Claudia Jones’ FBI files required that I read the item, scan it, catalogue it, and write a short description. After the first day, I had perfected my cataloguing method so that going back, it would be easy to convert and merge my scans and organize them for Dr. Burden-Stelly.

My experience as a Summer Research Partner has fueled my passion for challenging and changing the U.S. education system into the great equalizer that it is intended to be. After graduating from Carleton, I now plan on pursuing my M.A. in Sociology of Education from NYU Steinhardt, specializing in Social Inequality. I hope to have a career in education that focuses on improving and equalizing educational opportunities for students of color in urban areas.
Marching with the Romans

In the years 169-68 BCE, the Roman army was in Greece on campaign against the Macedonian empire. Ancient historian Livy records the efforts of the Romans to find a way across the ridges between Olympus and the Vale of Tempe; these sections of Livy are incomplete and possibly corrupted. There is debate over the Latin as well as the content of the text, especially regarding where exactly the Romans went. Our research was a geographical study of the area to see where it was possible for the Romans to go and if it lines up with the description in Livy. We also investigated the presence of a Macedonian fort system in the area, a major factor on Roman movement. The research produced a proposition for the Roman routes, locations for the Macedonian forts, and a new reading of the Latin.

Perhaps the most amazing aspect of the research trip was seeing with my own eyes land features, hills, mountains, and rivers, that an author from 2600 years ago wrote about in a text I spent considerable time poring over prior to the trip. In addition to the research I had the opportunity to visit Athens, Greece for the first time, and it was amazing to see the integration of the ancient remains and dig sites into the sprawl of modern Athens.

Working with Jake Morton was amazing; in addition to his thorough preparation for each day of work and zeal for the subject, he showed incredible enthusiasm for the SRP’s learning, taking every opportunity to stop and relate bits and pieces of ancient and modern Greek history, as well as his personal experiences as an ancient historian. He built time into the research trip to expose us to some of the more famous and storied ancient ruins in Greece that were along the way, and gave us the opportunity to talk to leading classicists as well. The trip exposed us to the culture of modern Greece as well, eating and sleeping in little mountain villages near our work area. Each day he involved us in planning the next day’s work and exactly how it related to our bigger-picture goals. A perfect example of this was after a long day of hiking we went into one said village to get Greek coffee and recap the discoveries of the day at a little cafe, where the elderly owner and his family inquired about our research after learning we were in fact not a German family hiking on vacation.

Marching with the Romans

Our research in Greece could most aptly be described as a large topographical study. Using ancient sources such as the writings of Livy and Plutarch, we set out on foot to attempt to recreate various episodes in the Third Macedonian War. In that sense, we aimed to corroborate the written sources at our disposal by examining the actual landscape as the Romans and Macedonians in the way the Romans and Macedonians did over 2,000 years ago.

Aside from simply stating that the entire trip was interesting, there are two specific experiences during our research that stand out vividly. First, near the end of our time in the foothills of Mount Olympus, as we summited Mt. Metamorphosis, the entire landscape around us began to come into view. As we climbed higher, we could see clear back in Thessaly and well into (the former) Macedon. Just as Livy wrote, this moment certainly aroused our spirits and ignited a wonderful joy in our hearts. A little later in the trip, we had another equally invigorating moment when we successfully proved the route taken by Phillipus and his war elephants. While this certainly does not ring as exciting without context, it was definitely a moment I will likely never forget.
Marching with the Romans

I assisted Jake’s research on the Roman Army’s movements throughout Greece during the Third Macedonian War. Additionally, I conducted my own research on the methods of archaeological topography. In this project, I researched a method known as autopsy, which I have determined is necessary for any archaeological topography project.

The experience as a whole was incredible. One day, we went to Leake’s fort, a fort I had been reading about for my research. Seeing the fort in person was indescribable. The fort is not in the results list via a google search. Seeing it in person allowed me to observe the fort in a way that articles that described it did not allow me to. During this experience I became more assertive. I discovered I really love hands-on research more than remote research.

One amazing experience we had was hiking Mt. Metamorphosis. We were not the first group doing archaeological topography involving Mount Metamorphosis. One researcher provided a description of the view from the top of the mountain, which he said did not include a beach. However, when we climbed to the top of the mountain, we had a very clear view of the shoreline. It was exciting to make this original discovery.
BEN PERRY ’22

with Professor Barbara Allen

News Ownership and Election Coverage

Our project was focused on the collection of data on local election news during the 2008 election. A group of television stations was selected to cover a range of ownership, ranging from corporate conglomerates like Sinclair, to locally owned single stations. As part of a larger existing data set, this data could be used to examine questions of ownership’s effect on the election coverage of local news.

Learning to work remotely along with a friend and research partner was vastly different from my prior work experience. It challenged my time management skills, but was rewarding to bring my earlier work to fruition. I also gained the understanding of what it means to undertake a long term project. With this experience I will be well prepared to begin my Comps during senior year.

Barbara Allen was incredibly encouraging throughout this project, which began in her class. She cleared the hurdles related to getting access to the vaults of local news broadcasts. The things we learned in her class were immediately relevant to our research.

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POLITICAL SCIENCE

JACK SCHILL ’22

with Professor Barbara Allen

News Ownership and Election Coverage

Local news has an outsized importance in providing the news. This project explores the biases and effectiveness of the election coverage of 6 local news stations in the midwest. Sinclair news broadcast company is a conglomerate of over 200 local news stations and is known to have a politically conservative bent. Using Sinclair-owned stations in Madison, WI and Cedar Rapids, IA, we hoped to establish whether or not this ownership affected the election coverage in 2016 using 2008 as a control since both stations were acquired after the 2008 elections. We also compared coverage of Minnesota local news stations between 2008 and 2016.

I think the most interesting thing was reading what kind of news people take in on a daily basis. Doing this sheds light on local news coverage, the biases included, and how it could potentially improve in the markets we observed.

Through this experience I learned how to effectively evaluate massive amounts of data and improved my ability to streamline a complex process with many interconnected steps. I also learned what social science research can look like. I improved my ability to work with a team, and learned how to effectively communicate with a group without meeting in person.

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Local News is Flawed


Stations personalize, dramatize, fragment, and standardize the news, all of which detract from an informed citizenry (Bennet 2005).

Data show a bias towards negative content. This bias towards negativity dampens interest in participation, perpetuating and perhaps increasing political divisions. (Bennet 2005).

According to Pew Research Center, Local TV News is the most common news source for Americans.
Henry Brown ’22 (Spanish and Religion) and Associate Professor Palmar Álvarez-Blanco (Spanish) edited videos for “Constellation of the Commons,” an audio-visual archive of interviews with leaders of collective movements. They transcribed in Spanish and created English subtitles for each video.

Nicholas Ford ’21 (Undeclared) and Associate Professor Andrew Flory (Music) sorted and cataloged CDs and other material about Marvin Gaye, for use in a planned 2-book study on Gaye’s musical career. It focused on the full range of Gaye’s creativity, including released and unreleased recordings, live performances, and television and film appearances.

Anne Hackman ’19 (English) and Professor Nancy Cho (English) examined articles written by Hisaye Yamamoto, a Japanese American writer, in The Poston Chronicle newspaper (1942-45), tackling the complicated topic of the incarceration camp as the site of Yamamoto’s coming-of-age as a writer.

Jack Hardwick ’19 (Music) and Assistant Professor Andrea Mazzariello (Music) wrote software that “performed” a composition for use in a collaboration with the Northfield Union of Youth (The Key). They developed systems for editing, cutting, and organizing documented audio, building in ways to interact with it in the performance environment.

Jean La Fontaine ’19 (Latin American Studies) and Visiting Assistant Professor Elena McGrath (History) created a database of clean, readable transcriptions of court cases in both Spanish and English that can be easily cited in the manuscript Devil’s Bargains: Workers, Indians, and Citizens at the Limits of the Bolivian National Revolution (1930-1989), and used to create a map of neighborhood locales that became hotspots for racial and gendered disputes in those decades.

Ishmael Maxwell ’21 (Undeclared) and Zoe Pharo’21 (Undeclared) and Professor Dev Gupta (Political Science) scheduled, conducted, transcribed, and analyzed interviews of people on the official Register of Tartans, as part of a project on the invention of tradition in the context of nation building.

Jenni Rogan ’19 (Biology, History minor) and Associate Professor George Vrtis (History and ENTS) reviewed MPR’s Tim Nelson’s Twitter feed on the “MPR Raccoon,” retrieving and organizing the data into a chronological format, and analyzing it for use in a co-edited book on the eco-social relationships connecting the Twin Cities and rural Minnesota.

Fernando Saldívia Yanez ’20 (Cinema and Media Studies) and Alan Zheng’20 (Psychology) and Instructor Cecilia Cornejo (Cinema and Media Studies) did final edits, transcriptions, translations, subtitles, and preliminary color corrections on selected interviews for “Ways of Being Home,” a documentary film that examines marginalization and belonging from the perspective of Mexican immigrants living in Northfield, MN.

Margot Shaya ’21 (Undeclared) and Visiting Assistant Professor Megan Sarno (Music) conducted research for a book that offers the concept of mystery as a frame for much of the motivation to compose music in twentieth-century France. They also explored the theme of concert attendance as religious experience.

Irene Stoutland ’21 (Undeclared) and Professor Kelly Connole (Art and Art History) finished several series of ceramic pieces for upcoming exhibitions, researched references to sins and virtues in various cultures, and edited a cohesive artist statement about the work. These projects explore the contradictions and complexities of being human.

Read Wilder ’20 (History and Classics) and Professor William North (History) finalized the full translation of De Miraculis (On Miracles) by Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, developing annotations, and maps to support the text, and prepared a scholarly introduction to the work, which will be co-authored.

* Awards made possible by the generous gifts of Alison von Klemperer ’82, P’16, and Anthony Tancredi ’85.
In fall of 2018 the Humanities Center marked its 10th anniversary at a festive event featuring a panel discussion on the importance of the humanities at this intellectual, cultural, and political moment. Today the Center continues to serve as an intellectual catalyst for the campus, through its faculty research seminars, student research partnerships, digital humanities projects, and events on humanistic dimensions of art, ethics, politics, the sciences, and more.