Rethinking the American Diet

We’ve long known the effects of food choices on our bodies—but what about their effects on our planet?
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WINTER 2017

RADCLIFFE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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TOP: Sports provide a revealing lens for viewing contemporary societal issues. On April 6–7, “Game Changers: Sports, Gender, and Society” will explore the relationship between sports and gender with an arts event, panel discussions, and a conversation with Laila Ali. For more information, see page 36.

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A Place for Discourse and Discovery

As 2017 begins, I am reminded anew of the Radcliffe Institute’s importance. With all the challenges facing our world, more than ever we need a place like Radcliffe, where prominent scholars, leading thinkers, and serious students can come together to address pressing issues with broad public audiences. As dean, I take the Institute’s responsibilities very seriously.

We heed the call to unite inquiry with action in numerous ways. Among our fall events, we examined the plight of international refugees (see “Families in Flight,” page 8), affirmed our commitment to political diversity in our institutions (see “Righting the Record,” page 10), and convened experts from various disciplines to focus on climate change (see “Our Changing Oceans,” page 12). This spring, we will host conferences on gender and sports, slavery and universities, and the human experience of urbanism, along with lectures, exhibitions, and seminars.

On Radcliffe Day 2017, we will take on an issue that has grown even timelier since we began planning more than a year ago: the integrity of journalism. We will award Radcliffe medals to the late Gwen Ifill (1955–2016) and Judy Woodruff for the lasting impact they have made with their individual reporting and their historic partnership as anchors and managing editors of PBS NewsHour. Woodruff will engage in conversation with the writer Walter Isaacson ’74, and the New York Times columnist David Brooks will provide personal commentary. The journalist and author Michele Norris will accept the Radcliffe Medal on behalf of her close friend Gwen Ifill.

The day will begin with “(Un)Truths and Their Consequences,” a panel exploring real news, fake stories, and today’s complex media landscape, which will feature Danielle Allen (the James Bryant Conant University Professor and the director of the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard) and the journalists A’Lelia Bundles ’74, E.J. Dionne ’73, and Peggy Noonan. Ann Marie Lipinski, curator of the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard and my wonderful partner in planning the day, will moderate the discussion.

Our work at Radcliffe is ambitious. We are grateful to the generous alumnae/i and friends who have supported it and brought the Radcliffe Campaign more than 90 percent of the way to our $70 million goal (see page 37).

And we appreciate all who join us, in person and online, as we continue to profess the power of ideas. Radcliffe Day 2017 will mark the end of this academic year, but it will also launch our two-year initiative on the theme of citizenship, which, like the Institute itself, feels especially crucial now.

Lizabeth Cohen
Dean
“One block. Four experts. Infinite perspectives.” That’s how Adam Tanaka, a Radcliffe Institute Graduate Student Fellow and doctoral candidate in urban planning at Harvard, described “Decode a City Block,” his collaboration with the Institute’s Academic Ventures program. Part of Radcliffe’s urbanism initiative, the event brought together an ecologist, an urban designer, a sound artist, and a community activist to reflect on an area in the neighborhood of Cambridgeport—but the specific location was a surprise to most participants.

Fellows from across disciplines—a novelist, a bioengineer, and an astronomer among them—joined in the walk on this unseasonably warm autumn day, and the filmmaker Lav Diaz (see page 40) filmed the experience. They found a bustling and diverse residential neighborhood, one in which Harvard family apartments share space with public housing and elegant townhouses, and in which two playgrounds and a school ensure that children’s voices fill the air.
A LEADING EXPERT ON OBESITY PREVENTION policy, Sara Bleich PhD '07 has been named a Carol K. Pforzheimer Professor at the Radcliffe Institute and a professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Bleich studies the escalation of obesity and its related diseases, devoting special attention to the drivers of obesity, disparities in patterns of obesity care, and environmental strategies to reduce caloric intake. Working at the crossroads of science and public policy, she also examines the assessment, global trends, consequences, and prevention of adult and childhood obesity.

Bleich earned her BA from Columbia University and her PhD from Harvard University. She taught at the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University from 2007 to 2016. Prior to joining the Johns Hopkins faculty, she worked as a research associate at the RAND Corporation and The Measurement Group. She has received numerous competitive awards from organizations such as the National Institutes of Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In 2015–2016, she served as a White House Fellow.

Like all tenured Radcliffe Professors, Bleich will spend two years at the Institute during her first five years at Harvard. "The Radcliffe Professorship will provide me with an invaluable opportunity to step back and broaden my research focus," she says. "Being surrounded by Radcliffe fellows from such a diversity of professional backgrounds will push me to think differently about issues I already know well and issues I am eager to better understand. I suspect that by the end of the experience I will have developed new colleagues at Radcliffe and across the University who will allow me to have an even more stimulating experience at Harvard."

KENVI PHILLIPS HAS JOINED the staff of the Schlesinger Library as its first curator for race and ethnicity.

An accomplished historian, Phillips holds a master’s in public history and a doctorate in US history from Howard University. Before coming to the Schlesinger, she worked at the Mary McLeod Bethune House in Washington and the Maryland–National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Most recently, she served as assistant curator for manuscripts and librarian for prints and photographs at Howard’s internationally renowned Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.

Jane Kamensky, the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation Director of the library and a professor in Harvard’s Department of History, says, "This long-planned position represents a pioneering effort, with few equivalents at other major special collections libraries and no others yet at Harvard. The new curatorship makes tangible and visible the library’s sustained commitment to building a more inclusive archive. I can’t wait to see the kinds of fresh thinking and new relationships that Kenvi will bring to the Schlesinger and to the Radcliffe and Harvard campuses."

Phillips will work on building collections that document the intersections of gender, race, class, and ethnicity in American history, Kamensky says. Through personal outreach, public programming, and exhibitions, she will build relationships with people from communities that are currently underrepresented in the library’s collections.

“As we approach the Schlesinger’s 75th anniversary,” Phillips says, “I am truly delighted to be part of the next phase of developing the collections and community relations. I look forward to helping raise the voices and highlight the accomplishments of women who are underrepresented at the Schlesinger and often undervalued in American society.”
Two New Faculty Directors Named

RADCLIFFE’S FACULTY DIRECTORS are tenured Harvard faculty members who want to be at the forefront of developing the Institute’s cutting-edge programming across the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences. Individuals who are dedicated to working across disciplines to generate new ideas and share them with the public, they return to their full-time roles at Harvard after they complete their appointments with Radcliffe.

Harvard faculty members who will join Radcliffe’s Academic Ventures program on July 1 are Alyssa A. Goodman AM ’86, PhD ’89, RI ’17 (the 2016–2017 Edward, Frances, and Shirley B. Daniels Fellow and the Robert Wheeler Willson Professor of Applied Astronomy) and Shigehisa (Hisa) Kuriyama ’77, AM ’78, PhD ’81 (the Reischauer Institute Professor of Cultural History in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations and the Department of the History of Science). Working with the Institute’s other three faculty directors, they will develop innovative programs to engage researchers, students, fellows, faculty members, and the public.

Goodman will codirect Radcliffe’s science program. Her work spans astronomy, data visualization, science education, and the use of technology in academic research and teaching. Recently, she has focused on the history, science, and art of making predictions from ancient Mesopotamia to modern computer simulation of climate change.

She earned an undergraduate degree in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a PhD in physics from Harvard. She was a President’s Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of California, Berkeley, before joining the Harvard faculty.

Kuriyama, who will direct Radcliffe’s humanities program, is a Japanologist and a historian of medicine. His work explores broad philosophical issues (being and time, representations and reality, knowing and feeling) through the lens of specific topics in comparative medical history (China, Europe, and Japan). His book *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine* (Zone, 1999) received the 2001 William H. Welch Medal of the American Association for the History of Medicine and has been translated into Chinese, Greek, Spanish, and Korean.

He has been expanding the horizons of teaching and scholarly communication through the creative use of digital technologies at Harvard and other universities in the United States and abroad.

Kuriyama earned undergraduate and master’s degrees from Harvard. After completing acupuncture studies in Tokyo, he earned a PhD at Harvard. He joined the Harvard faculty as Reischauer Institute Professor after working at the University of New Hampshire, Emory University, and the International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto, Japan.

“Alyssa and Hisa are full of ideas for bringing together people and projects that are uniquely suited to Radcliffe’s place at the crossroads of exploration and illumination,” says Radcliffe Institute Dean Lizabeth Cohen. “We look forward to supporting their pursuits in the years ahead and sharing their work broadly.”
Mixed Messages: Exhibition Pushes Artistic Boundaries

The first exhibition of the academic year introduced visitors to bold work from the 2016–2017 fellowship class—work that transcended academic disciplines.

It’s an eclectic exhibition.

An interstellar image hangs next to videos of tiny ocean organisms swimming through their own vast universe. Close by, a slab of black shale stands out atop a white stand. Language doubles as visual art in a series of photos with bits of graffiti from the occupied West Bank and Jaffa, Israel.

The Art of Discovery, which ran this fall in the Johnson-Kulukundis Family Gallery at Radcliffe, showcased work by 13 current fellows, including scientists, a mathematician, an anthropologist, and an urban planner.

The show “exemplifies the core Radcliffe principle of commitment to the arts as a method of inquiry integrated with other forms of study,” said Radcliffe Dean Elizabeth Cohen, delivering brief remarks during the exhibition’s opening reception.

That integration was well under way at the crowded afternoon event. An astronomer discussed her work with a visual artist, and a wordsmith carefully surveyed the gallery that included a video about a housing project in New York as well as her own “acrostic elegies.” Nearby, a historian with a passion for science explained to onlookers how hydraulic fracturing releases the gas contained within shale like the small sedimentary slab she’d found along a highway in Arkansas and included in the show.

“By bringing a piece of Fayetteville shale into an art gallery, I wanted to emphasize the beauty and wonder that are part of the technologically complex, economically vital, and scientifically complicated questions of how we produce our energy,” said Conevery Bolton Valencius, the 2016–2017 Katherine Hampson Bessell Fellow at Radcliffe and a history professor at Boston College.

During her fellowship, she is working on a book about the link between hydraulic fracturing and earthquakes.

The biologist Chris Bowler, the 2016–2017 Grass Fellow at Radcliffe, added to the show the mesmerizing Plankton Chronicles, which attracted a steady stream of viewers. The video, created by Christian Sardet, Bowler’s colleague at France’s Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique Lyon, aims to expand the understanding of plankton beyond simply “food for the whales,” according to Bowler, and encourages viewers to “appreciate their beauty and their importance for keeping our planet habitable.” Bowler will use his time at Radcliffe to study the potential effects of climate change on plankton.

The visual artist Tania Bruguera, the 2016–2017 Elizabeth S. and Richard M. Cashin Fellow at Radcliffe, whose Manifesto on Artists’ Rights is based on a talk she delivered at the United Nations office in Geneva in 2012, called being part of an exhibit that blends works by artists and nonartists “fantastic.”

“It actually proves that there is an easy overlap between all our practices,” said Bruguera, who is devoting her fellowship to further work on the Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt, an art institute in Havana and an online platform that promotes civic literacy in Cuba. The opening lines of Bruguera’s Manifesto highlight her point.

“Art is not a luxury,” it reads. “Art is a basic social need to which everyone has a right. Art is a way of building thought, of being aware of oneself and others at the same time.”

The reception attracted a Harvard newcomer with a deep interest in interdisciplinary collaborations and merging art with science and other fields of inquiry. Martha Tedeschi, the Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard Art Museums, encouraged the fellows to stop by the museums and, in particular, to explore the Art Study Center, where visitors may request works for up-close inspection.

The Harvard Art Museums are “a resource for you if you are looking for some kind of visual inspiration that might spark a conversation,” Tedeschi said.

“Art is a basic social need to which everyone has a right. Art is a way of building thought, of being aware of oneself and others at the same time.”

TANIA BRUGUERA
FAMILIES IN FLIGHT

In the face of an escalating international refugee crisis, experts from disparate fields agreed that countries must work together for multilateral solutions.

Radcliffe Institute Dean Lizabeth Cohen shared a striking statistic at the opening of “Families in Flight,” an October panel discussion focused on the escalating international refugee crisis: “At the end of 2014, the United Nations estimated that one out of every 122 people on earth was displaced and seeking refuge or asylum.”

Describing the massive scale of a disaster fed by ongoing conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, intensified by a civil war in Syria that has displaced an estimated 13 million people, Cohen set the stage for a compelling call to action. Of the more than 65 million forcibly displaced within their own countries or across international borders, 80 percent are women and children. The academics and activists who gathered at Radcliffe voiced the urgent need for countries to work together to forge multilateral solutions to a growing list of humanitarian, political, and logistical challenges.

First Responders
Panelist Noel Calhoun, a senior policy officer at the United Nations, criticized Western actions aimed increasingly at restricting border crossers and creating new barriers to refugee status. “The responsibility for hosting refugees is not shared fairly,” she said. “When we read newspapers, we get the sense that lots of refugees are coming into the United States or Europe. But that impression is skewed.”

Calhoun, who was deeply involved in the UN summit of September 2016 on refugees and migrants, said, “The vast majority of refugees are in developing countries. In fact, eight ‘first responder’ countries in Africa and Asia host half of the world’s refugees.”

Offering historical context, Susan Akram, a law professor at Boston University and the director of its International Human Rights Clinic, noted that the United States, European countries, and Turkey are all bound by the UN’s 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol, key documents that govern international refugee protection. Turkey has already taken in two million Syrians and, Akram noted, “Nations such as Jordan and Lebanon that have accepted millions of Syrians and hosted most of the world’s Palestinian refugees have opened their doors even without legal obligation to do so.”

But as new policies stemming refugees’ passage to Europe and the Americas take hold, asylum seekers in countries on the front lines of the crisis are further threatened. Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon have recently closed their borders, multiplying the dangers refugees face as they try to leave the region. Since 2014, Akram reported, 7,500 people have died attempting the sea crossing to Europe.

Desperate Journeys
The Syrian physician Abdulkarim Ekzayez challenged the Radcliffe gathering to imagine the desperation behind such journeys, observing, “The conditions they are escaping from are worse than drowning in the sea.”

Now based in Turkey, Ekzayez travels frequently to Syria to administer a vaccination program in his role as health program manager for Save the Children, Syria Response. He described Aleppo as a city under siege and shared a shocking video of an attack on a hospital emergency room where health workers were treating injured civilians.

During a two-month period last summer, Ekzayez said, 30 Syrian hospitals were partly or completely destroyed by forces backing President Bashar al-Assad. “The regime doesn’t allow injured people to get medical help,” he stated. “There is no food, water, fuel, or medical supplies. Safety is not provided for UN or other relief workers.”

Reclaiming Identities
Traumatized by spiraling violence and the death of loved ones, Syrian women and children are fleeing their country under chaotic circumstances, often alone and without documentation. Some end up in Lebanon, where Rania Matar, an award-winning photographer and instructor at the Massachusetts College of Art, has been documenting their presence on the streets of Beirut in an effort to help them reclaim their identities.

“These kids are very vulnerable,” said Matar, noting that many Syrian children who find their way to long-established Palestinian refugee camps are trucked into the city each morning to spend the day begging for money, selling roses, or...
The vast majority of refugees are in developing countries. In fact, eight ‘first responder’ countries in Africa and Asia host half of the world’s refugees.

NOEL CALHOUN

Syrian Kurdish people arrive at the border between Syria and Turkey after several mortars hit both sides in the southeastern town of Suruc, in Turkey.

shining shoes. “All their stories blend into one big story,” she said. “Mothers missing or begging on another street corner, fathers dead or fighting in Syria—they don’t even know for which side.”

Matar’s photographs also chronicle life inside the overcrowded Lebanese camps, where third and fourth generations of Palestinian refugees are being born. “I focus on the universality of mothers nursing babies, girls growing up to become young women,” Matar explained. “They deserve respect, focus, and attention. These refugees are girls before they are anything else.”

Next Steps
Toward the end of the afternoon, Jacqueline Bhabha, the moderator and a professor of the practice of health and human rights at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, returned to the question of compliance with existing international agreements and prospects for the development of more effective approaches to refugee migration and resettlement. “What does reality tell us when we have countries such as Hungary and the Czech Republic, which have ratified refugee conventions as a condition of joining the European Union, but who have also said they don’t want refugees or Muslims?” Bhabha asked.

The UN’s Calhoun responded, “The concept of international cooperation to share the burden of hosting refugees is in the 1951 convention, but systems for doing that are not there. We have better international systems governing the movement of goods and services than we do the movement of people.”

Referencing the status of Palestinian refugees—an open question for 67 years—Akram said, “Political dialogue needs to include legal dialogue. The question of enforcement particularly plagues refugee law. The refugee convention permits states to take violations to the International Court of Justice, but there has never been such a case.”

Calhoun reported the somewhat encouraging results of a painstakingly negotiated UN document signed last fall by General Assembly member states. Key elements included a reaffirmation of the 1951 convention, recognition of the human rights of refugees and migrants, more focus on long-term support for countries that host refugees, and the launch of a process to establish a fairer system for sharing responsibility for refugees.

“But a political document adopted in New York isn’t legally binding,” Calhoun cautioned. “What it takes to make states accountable is action on many different levels—and the most important action is that of citizens who press for states to live up to the commitments they have made.”

Deborah Blagg is a freelance writer.
Archiving a Conservative Legacy

A Schlesinger Library event considered ways to counter archival scarcity of right-leaning voices.

“It is our duty to safeguard as complete and multisided a record of the history of American women as we are able to assemble,” said Jane Kamensky, the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation Director of the Schlesinger Library and a professor of history at Harvard, as she introduced a panel discussion with noted scholars of the new right and conservative activists, “Righting the Record: Conservatism and the Archives.”

The Schlesinger Library maintains one of the world’s foremost collections of manuscripts and rare printed materials from leading individuals and organizations in the political and social history of American women, including the papers of Susan B. Anthony, Betty Friedan, Pauli Murray, and Harriet Beecher Stowe.

At their core, the Schlesinger’s materials center on the long history of women’s rights and feminism. At present, however, only a small portion of the collection documents the work of women in grassroots conservatism following World War II. Indeed, the history of conservative thought and activism regarding family values—marriage, gender roles, sexuality—remains under-documented well beyond the Schlesinger’s vaults, whether compared with progressive social activism or with conservative movements led by men and involving geopolitics.

The library’s holdings already include several conservative collections, such as the papers of Anna Chen Chennault, a successful businesswoman and an active supporter of the Republican Party who campaigned for Richard Nixon. The Schlesinger also acquired the papers of Mildred Jefferson, the first African American woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School, who later became a popular speaker for the right-to-life movement. But the library is committed to expanding these holdings to provide a wider range of records and resources for the future.

“We’re at a generational turning point,” Kamensky said, “where records of the heated family-values contests of the post-WWII era will either make their way into institutions or suffer the fate of most of the records of most of humanity over most of history, which is to be lost.

“It’s our job to think about the future as much as the present and the past, to imagine how researchers a century from now will understand our moment and how we can help anticipate that important work.”

JANE KAMENSKY

The paucity of publicly available documentary information about conservative Archiving a Conservative Legacy

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JANE KAMENSKY
women makes it challenging to conduct research, said Michelle Nickerson, an associate professor of history at Loyola University Chicago. In her book *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton University Press, 2012), Nickerson documented activism among Los Angeles housewives during the 1950s. But few repositories could provide the necessary materials. “When I first talked to archivists, they told me they really didn’t have anything for me,” she said.

By sifting through broader collections, Nickerson teased out the names of relevant women and then tracked them down—sometimes by cold-calling—to conduct interviews and seek access to papers and memorabilia many had saved in their homes. It was a painstaking effort, she said.

Historical archives are the first stop for scholars and the most enduring way to preserve an intellectual legacy, Nickerson said, arguing that conservatives would do well to consider handing over their collections to repositories like the Schlesinger. Such a stable, sensitive institutional context ensures that ideas and work will be well preserved and accessible for posterity.

“Take conservatism on its own terms,” Jennifer Marshall, a vice president of the Heritage Foundation, the conservative Washington, DC, think tank, urged archivists. “Investigate and present its stated principles, rationale, and aims, [and] discern its internal coherence rather than imposing extrinsic theories on it.” She added that libraries should work to identify “authentic representatives and emblematic expressions” of conservatism.

“Trust—that’s a real issue,” said Charmaine Yoest, a pioneering antiabortion activist and senior fellow at the nonproft American Values. Misunderstanding and fear of women on the other side is damaging and all too pervasive. “What happens when we throw around terms like ‘internalized misogyny’ is that those of us who might hold different positions from the prevailing ideology become a caricature,” Yoest said. “And that’s not productive.”

Establishing a personal rapport with leading movement figures is key to gaining access to important materials not in public hands, said the historian Donald Critchlow, director of the Center for Political Thought and Leadership at Arizona State University.

While researching his book *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman’s Crusade* (Princeton University Press, 2005), Critchlow said he first had to persuade the late activist that his intentions were honorable. Schlafly AM ’45 (1924–2016) kept an extensive archive in her attic but was wary of allowing scholars to go through it for fear the material might be used against her. (The Schlafly archive remains in private hands.)

Critchlow’s advice for bringing together conservative thinkers and archives seeking to diversify their holdings: “Convince people that they’ll have a legacy beyond their own activist lifetimes.”

Christina Pazzanese is a freelance writer who also contributes to the Harvard Gazette.
climate control

Ocean water and ice help stabilize our climate, and this system is being altered by an unprecedented increase in carbon dioxide levels and global temperatures, largely from the burning of fossil fuels. The polar ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica have waxed and waned over Earth's history, explained Maureen Raymo, the director of the Lamont-Doherty Core Repository at Columbia University. But human activity is changing the system beyond this natural variability. While the ultimate impact will depend on the actions of governments and citizens, seas may rise by four feet or more by the end of this century.

At the Linda N. Cabot Science Symposium at the Radcliffe Institute, “From Sea to Changing Sea,” held at the Knafel Center, scientists from a wide range of disciplines drew a portrait of oceans in flux. They discussed the history of the oceans and the diverse life they hold, the role they play in the global climate system, and the sobering science of how climate change will impact life in the sea and on land.

The Evolution of Oceans

Life on Earth depends on the oceans that blanket three-quarters of its surface. They began forming nearly four billion years ago, as the hot, churning planet cooled. “What was this ancient ocean like?” asked David Emerson, a senior research scientist at the Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, in Maine. He has found clues in ancient sea floors, such as layers of iron-rich rock that may have been laid down by primitive microbes that used iron and light for energy.

Eventually, microbes called cyanobacteria developed the ability to perform photosynthesis with water, sunlight, and carbon dioxide, producing oxygen. This process created our current atmosphere and was “the most important evolutionary adaptation that we know of,” Emerson said.

Over time, complex organisms emerged. “Our ocean isn’t one homogenous bucket of soup; it’s an environment that has many habitats within it,” said Peter Girguis, a professor of organismic and evolutionary biology at Harvard. Near the ocean’s surface, organisms must cope with variable light and temperature. In the deep ocean, the environment is more stable, but it’s one that we would hardly recognize: dark, still, and under intense pressure, giving rise to diverse sponges, squids, fish, and soft-bodied seafloor organisms.

Can this great diversity continue to evolve and to thrive in oceans altered by human activity? Unfortunately, Girguis said, evolution is usually very slow, and “most organisms today are not really poised to respond to the rapid change in our environment.”

Climate Control

Ocean water and ice help stabilize our climate, and this system is being altered by an unprecedented increase in carbon dioxide levels and global temperatures, largely from the burning of fossil fuels. The polar ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica have waxed and waned over Earth’s history, explained Maureen Raymo, the director of the Lamont-Doherty Core Repository at Columbia University. But human activity is changing the system beyond this natural variability. While the ultimate impact will depend on the actions of governments and citizens, seas may rise by four feet or more by the end of this century.
“We are left with only 30 percent of the ice we used to have in the summer decades ago,” and the ice has thinned.

REBECCA WOODGATE
of this century. “Five million people live within four feet of sea level in the US today,” she said. “There’s a huge amount of real estate that is in this zone of risk.”

Warming has already dramatically changed the Arctic, explained Rebecca Woodgate, the senior principal oceanographer at the University of Washington. Ocean passages that were once dangerous or impossible for ships are now open to luxury cruises. “We are left with only 30 percent of the ice we used to have in the summer decades ago,” she said, and the ice has thinned.

Our oceans have also been serving as a buffer against rapid climate change. “The ocean is really helping us out,” said Lynne Talley, a distinguished professor at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego. It has absorbed about 30 percent of the carbon dioxide that humans have emitted, and about 90 percent of the excess heat added to the planet.

Impacts of Change
These changes will be felt in New England. As Radcliffe Institute Dean Lizabeth Cohen noted at the start of the day, “The coastline is literally right at our doorstep, so concerns about rising sea levels hit very close to home.”

Sea-level rise is not uniform; because of gravitational effects and subsiding land, it will be more acute here than in other parts of the world, said Ellen Douglas, an associate professor of hydrology at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Meanwhile, storms are expected to become more common, and rising seas will exacerbate flooding. Simple flood maps fail to account for real-life storm patterns, so Douglas’s team has modeled the effects of future floods on Boston’s infrastructure to give government agencies a better idea of the city’s vulnerabilities.

Over the past decade or so, the Gulf of Maine “warmed faster than 99 percent of the global ocean,” said Andrew Pershing, the chief scientific officer at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. One of the major casualties of that change is New England’s cod fishery. Overfishing played a role in plummeting fish stocks, but warmer waters have made recovery challenging.

“We’re not only warming the atmosphere and the oceans, but we’re also changing the chemistry of the oceans in specific and measurable ways,” said Anne L. Cohen, an associate scientist at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. High levels of carbon dioxide make the ocean more acidic, which reduces the amount of calcium carbonate available to marine organisms to construct skeletons and shells. Coral bleaching is a well-known effect of ocean acidification, but economically important creatures such as mussels and sea scallops are also at risk.

Greenhouse gases are not the only means by which humans impact ocean life, however; the very sounds we make can be disruptive underwater. Christopher Clark, the founding director of the Bioacoustics Research Program at Cornell University, recounted his discovery decades ago of the hidden world of long-distance communication by Southern right whales. These and other marine animals depend on sound to maintain relationships. “Acoustics is their world,” he said. Humans, too, use underwater sound for communication, navigation, and defense, and we’re creating a dangerous din through shipping and oil and gas exploration.

These findings highlight the need for policies that can balance human interests with environmental protection. Rear Admiral Steven D. Poulin, commander of the First Coast Guard District, finished the day with a look at the complexities of policing and protecting the oceans. “We must ensure that we are good stewards of our oceans and that we do all we can to ensure sustainability. That stewardship will require collaboration between countries and across domains of science and government.”

Courtney Humphries is a freelance science writer.

“‘We’re not only warming the atmosphere and the oceans, but we’re also changing the chemistry of the oceans in specific and measurable ways.”’

ANNE L. COHEN
Organized Complexity

The novelist Garth Risk Hallberg talked about imbuing prose with a city-like sense of life.

Charles Dickens knew it. So did Victor Hugo, Zadie Smith RI’03, and dozens of other novelists: cities, in their ever-changing, richly layered diversity, are the perfect inspiration for novels. And perhaps novels, in turn, can help us better understand cities—and ourselves.

That was one of many insights to emerge from “Organized Complexity: The Novel and the City,” a talk given by the writer Garth Risk Hallberg as part of the Kim Knafel Center audience while introducing Hallberg to a Spy Louise Fitzhugh’s Harriet the Spy. “It wasn’t the property],” he said. Then came 9/11. As in the 1970s, if even then by the fact that everything he had was a different kind of grief,” Hallberg had a moment. 

For me, place is always a character. New York—being so diverse, concrete, and enormous—is going to be a huge character.”

CLAIRE MESSUD

days, taking in its people and streets and thinking about what made the city unique. Just before moving there for good, Hallberg had a moment of inspiration: He realized that everything he had been seeing and feeling and wondering about “wanted to express itself through this enormous story of 1975, 1976, and 1977—this other time when the city was broken and vulnerable and hovering on the edge.”

Twelve years later, he published City on Fire. More than 900 pages long, it appeared on numerous “best book” lists for 2015 and has been translated into 17 languages. Encompassing a wide cast of characters across various strata of society, the book orbits around an unsolved shooting in Central Park, its web of connections culminating in the New York City blackout of July 13, 1977. (Born in 1978, Hallberg drew on sources including Ken Auletta’s The Streets Were Paved with Gold [Random House, 1979] and Jonathan Mahler’s Ladies and Gentlemen, the Bronx is Burning: 1977, Baseball, Politics, and the Battle for the Soul of a City [Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005] to create the authentic sense of time and place so widely noted in reviews.)

It was in Jane Jacobs’s The Death and Life of Great American Cities (Random House,
TONY RINALDO  to reflect on the fact that when he sat down to write his novel, there was much talk of bookstores going bankrupt. Publishers seemed not far behind, and most people apparently couldn’t sustain attention for longer than a tweet. “But I did notice that everyone was on their 53rd episode of The Sopranos, which is a remarkable feat of attention,” he said. “By the time I got out of my garret with my incredibly unwieldy manuscript, people were going to bookstores.”

“Change had been happening,” Messud commented. The conversation continued, with audience questions that brought up what Jane Jacobs called “catastrophic money” and the role of research in creating authentic fiction. But that word, change, was a fitting echo for much of what had come before.
Rethinking the American Diet

FOR DECADES, SCIENTISTS HAVE BEEN STUDYING THE EFFECTS OF WHAT WE EAT ON OUR BODIES. GIDON ESHEL RI ’17, A GEOPHYSICIST, HAS SPENT THE PAST 10 YEARS STUDYING THE EFFECTS OF OUR FOOD CHOICES ON THE PLANET.

BY IVELISSE ESTRADA   PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONATHAN KOZOWYK
Gidon Eshel remembers well first seeing an American commercial farming enterprise. It was the early 1980s, and he was making his way across the United States, part of a years-long cycling trip around the world. Somewhere in the desert of southern California, Eshel found himself biking for several hours alongside a single trough of dairy cows. “Imagine head after head of cattle for 25 miles,” he says. “It was stunning.”

The scene affected him, and he wrote about it in letters to his mother, back home in Israel. “I described how odd it seemed to me that in the middle of this deeply arid hostile desert, there would be dairy farming, which is really water intensive,” says Eshel.

Living among Livestock
He would know: from the age of 13, Eshel grew up on an Israeli kibbutz, a complex and multifaceted agricultural commune where he helped run a dairy operation consisting of 620 to 650 cows that needed to be milked three times a day. “I used to remember each of the names of those 620 cows, and I could identify each one of them personally,” he says with a laugh. “I was crazy about the whole thing: the lifestyle, the cows themselves, the way we make and preserve food for them—I had a very unmediated connection with nature.”

Later, after four years of military service, Eshel had an opportunity to start his own herd of beef cattle, with which he lived atop a mountain in northern Israel: “Just me, the cows, and the dogs.” He lived this way, mostly alone and off the land, for two and a half years before choosing to embark on the cycling trip that would begin to open his eyes to large-scale US beef production. Paradoxically, it was during his time with the beef herd that Eshel began to phase out animal products from his diet, save for the occasional meat provided when one of his cattle became injured in the rugged environment. He refers to this as salvage eating, saying, “It was that or having the jackals eat it.”

Eshel has lived most of his life outdoors. He spent his first nine years at sea with his older sister, mother, and ship-captain father. He says that he’s always had an innate feel for the environment and could sense that human activities were affecting it in various ways: “I could see things happening but wasn’t really in the position to interpret them scientifically.”

Science Diet
In his very first paper, Gidon Eshel compared the mean American diet with five other hypothetical diets—and found that it releases more carbon dioxide (CO2) into the atmosphere than a vegan, poultry-based, lacto-ovo vegetarian, or pescatarian diet. (The only hypothetical diet to perform worse was one that gets all its animal protein from red meat.) In fact, compared with a plant-based diet, the mean American diet results in 1,500 kilograms of CO2 per person released annually into the atmosphere.

More-recent research has considered individual foods that consume fewer resources while delivering comparable energy and protein. Surprisingly, soybeans, tofu, and even spelt handily outperform beef on both counts.
“Nearly all new deforestation has been in the name of beef production. We’re driving species to extinction at a rate that is staggering, and it’s just for eating beef. It seems like such a poorly thought-out bargain.”
scientific path that would bring him to his current work. Pamela A. Martin—a friend and colleague at the University of Chicago, where both were assistant professors in the Department of Geophysics—considered his agricultural and scientific background and egged him on to investigate further. “I am of the first generation of geophysicists who had the advantage and the joy of having pictures of Earth from space—it really changed the course of the discipline,” Eshel says. “When you look at the earth from space, in the dark half-sphere you see illuminated features like cities and roads, making clear the scope of human interference with the natural world. But if you look at the day-lit half-sphere, almost the only thing that you can see related to us is agriculture.” Sensing that seeing food-production features from space had scientific implications, he took his colleague’s advice. “At that time, no one else was quantifying the environmental impacts of agriculture through the prism of sophisticated geophysics,” says Eshel. In 2006, he and Martin published “Diet, Energy, and Global Warming” in Earth Interactions. It was the first paper of its kind, and they would go on to coauthor several more papers on related topics.

Now, a decade into this course of research, Eshel is an expert on the various environmental tolls of the mean American diet, and his data have time and time again revealed its unsustainability. “Not only was I right,” says Eshel about his hunch that the American diet is environmentally suboptimal, “but I was right to an extent that I really did not expect.”

An Environmental Crisis

The mean American diet is rich in animal products, including beef. In the United States, pastureland comprises almost 0.7 billion acres—about a third of the country’s entire surface area—yet that land contributes only about a third of the calories

Collaborating across Disciplines

When he’s not in his Byerly Hall office, Eshel can be found attending meals and events at the Center for the Environment, directed by Daniel P. Schrag, a friend and collaborator whom he calls “super smart” and praises for his “talent in delivering succinct and well-packaged environmental messages.” Schrag is the Sturgis Hooper Professor of Geology and a professor of environmental science and engineering at Harvard, where he also directs the Laboratory for Geochemical Oceanography.

However, Eshel’s collaborations extend across disciplines—and across the river. Eshel has tapped two faculty members from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to ensure that his research yields nutritionally sound dietary advice that optimizes health as well as environmental outcomes. There, he’s working with Meir J. Stampfer, a professor of epidemiology and nutrition, and Walter Willett, the Frederick John Stare Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition.
consumed by beef cattle. (The other two-thirds are cultivated on about 78 million acres of high-quality cropland.) Devoting this land, much of it federally owned, to cattle grazing has environmental impacts beyond greenhouse gas emissions and water usage. It also leads to wildlife displacement, among other negative effects. “These are choices, and they’re not really leading us to an optimal allocation of resources—far from it,” says Eshel.

So what do the data reveal about how best to allocate those resources? “Save going all-out vegan, the most impactful change that you can make is to ditch beef altogether and replace it with poultry—just beef to poultry,” Eshel says. “That alone will allow the United States, with current resources used, to sustain fully 120 to 160 million additional Americans.” He has taken this message to the masses in such popular documentaries as *Planeat* (2010) and Leonardo DiCaprio’s *Before the Flood* (2016).

Worldwide, the problem is even larger, particularly in the tropics. “In recent years, nearly all new deforestation has been in the name of beef production,” Eshel explains. “We’re driving species to extinction at a rate that is staggering, and it’s just for eating beef. It seems like such a poorly thought-out bargain.”

The Way Forward
Eshel’s research keeps revealing the amazing effects that subtle dietary shifts can have. But should Americans eliminate beef, he asks, “what would replace it that will achieve the most impact, both nutritionally and environmentally?” This is the question to which Eshel is devoting his year as the 2016–2017 Hrdy Fellow at Radcliffe.

Currently a research professor of environmental physics at Bard College and founder of the website environmentalCalculations.com—which attempts to guide visitors looking for the best ways to mitigate their environmental impact—Eshel is collaborating with Harvard colleagues (see sidebar on facing page) at the Center for the Environment and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to unify environmental and nutritional science.

“There are many people, including some very well-meaning people, who take interest in the realm of the environment and agriculture but dispense advice that is not very sound,” he says. He’d like to counteract that with solid scientific evidence showing that minimizing or eliminating animal products significantly protects health along with the environment.

It’s an ambitious goal that he hopes will reveal a more efficient and sustainable American diet. Helping him along his fellowship journey are two Radcliffe Research Partners, Paul Stainier ’18 and Akshay Swaminathan ’19. The two undergraduates have produced enough original work to write their own paper (see sidebar on this page), with Eshel as coauthor, which they hope to publish before the end of the academic year. “They are phenomenal,” he says. “I’ve never seen undergraduates like this.”

Full Circle
This year, Eshel is surprised to find how much he is enjoying his city sojourn: walking around Cambridge, working out at the gym, food shopping in Central Square at H-Mart or the Harvest Co-op. It’s a lot different from his day-to-day life in the Hudson Valley, in New York. There, he lives with his family in a rural environment and bikes 16 miles to and from the Bard campus. They grow their own vegetables in the summer. “All our neighbors are farmers, every last one,” he says. “We’re the only household that isn’t. It’s an insular community where people help each other: if my neighbors’ sheep are loose, everybody will gather to bring them back in.”

The Hudson Valley is a long way from his rugged youth on the kibbutz, in the northern Israeli mountains, or cycling his way across foreign lands, but Eshel continues to live his life in a manner consistent with his upbringing. Now, however, after his years of scientific exploration, he knows the reasons behind the mysterious environmental changes he observed as a child—and his life’s work aims to ameliorate them.

Inspiring the Next Generation
Paul Stainier ’18 and Akshay Swaminathan ’19 are Harvard undergraduates who have signed on to work with Eshel this year as Radcliffe Research Partners. Their goal is to expand on models from Eshel’s original work to consider other types of consumption. “They use my code, my machinery, but they modify it for the specific calculations at hand,” the fellow says.

“He told us that we could turn it into a paper,” says Swaminathan. “He emphasized that one paper should communicate one single idea. Although we still have a lot more to do within this meat-replacement project, we reached a reasonable milestone that merits its own analysis.”

The resulting paper, which they hoped to submit in January for publication before the end of the academic year, presents plants that have a low environmental impact in terms of production but which provide sufficient protein. Swaminathan says, “We wanted to make sure that our recommendation didn’t sound like ‘If you want to replace beef in your diet to reduce your environmental impact, you just have to eat 20 pounds of lettuce a day!’ Their results show that soybeans, lentils, tofu, and peanuts are the foods that best replace beef.

Swaminathan, a joint concentrator in statistics and molecular and cellular biology with a secondary in global health and health policy, has been a lifelong vegetarian for cultural reasons. More recently, though, “I’ve become aware of the immense nutritional and environmental benefits of a plant-based diet,” he says. “I love being able to advocate for my lifelong diet with incontrovertible scientific evidence.”
The Man Who Breaks Codes

NICK PATTERSON’S THREE LIVES IN APPLIED MATHEMATICS

BY CORYDON IRELAND PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON GROW

Nick Patterson photographed at the Harvard Semitic Museum
Nick Patterson sat in his second-floor Byerly Hall office at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. On his desk, a computer screen glowed with dense columns of figures. It was a data set that had finally popped into the right order. “I love it here,” he said.

Patterson meant the liberating Radcliffe fellowship, the office itself (plenty of space and sunshine), and the opportunity to study the deep human history only DNA can tell. Room 220 hinted at the two abiding interests that brought Patterson to his present work: math (all the better to study genetic codes) and history (all the better to investigate the elusive admixtures that make us the humans we are today). A whiteboard in his office sang with joyous lines of numbers and formulas. A scattering of books were titles about the ancient world.

At Radcliffe, Patterson is investigating ways in which DNA reveals how populations (and languages) spread throughout Eurasia. Speakers of Indo-European languages were living 2,500 years ago in western China, on the Russian steppes, on the Atlantic coast of Europe, and in India. He asks, How did this linguistic and genetic spreading out happen? Patterson has no plans for a book, but a series of linked scholarly articles is under way. Three are in various stages of completion, including one on the origin of the Celts in what is now Great Britain. The son of Irish parents, he explains, “I am an ancient Briton studying ancient Britain.”

Starting Out
Back in the era of the Beatles and Twiggy and swinging London, Patterson, now age 69, was an undergraduate studying pure mathematics at the University of Cambridge. It was long enough ago, he said, that half his professors were veterans of Bletchley Park, the World War II code-breaking site.

Close behind him then was a London boyhood as a chess prodigy, a whiz with numbers, and a young natural at analytical thinking. “I liked doing math because I was good at it,” he said. “I could beat the other guys.” Patterson also had an early interest in history and remembers wondering, “Why is the world the way it is now?”

While earning a Cambridge PhD (“My wife made me finish,” said Patterson), he set out on a succession of careers that today seem dizzying and disparate until you consider that each was an exercise in what he came to love: applied mathematics. Inspired by the covert world of codes his professors had inhabited (at Cambridge, Bletchley was an open secret), but also simply in need of a job, the young man first became a cryptographer.

In 1972, he started working at Great Britain’s secret Government Communications Headquarters, where his research is still classified. “I was quite successful there,” said Patterson, who solved two long-standing problems almost right away. But the British civil service was marked by overtones of class privilege, and it favored administrators over scientists. “It was not the money, it was the insult,” he said of leaving. “I was beyond furious. I’m still furious to this day.”

Leaping the Pond
In 1980, at the top-secret Center for Communications Research in Princeton, New Jersey, Patterson became valuable quickly, though citizenship took a while longer. Secret documents used to appear on his desk stamped “For US Eyes Only, and Nick Patterson.” Of his time at the center, he said, “I regard myself as a foot soldier in the Cold War,” one who helped make the world “fractionally safer.” When that chapter in world history closed, Patterson feared that his work was “not important anymore” and that his job might disappear. “I felt very insecure, actually.”

Living in these secret worlds had left him with plenty to say but no way of saying it. Patterson is an inveterate raconteur, but he can’t tell stories about his top-secret days: “I’d go to jail.”

In 1993, with the Cold War no longer hot and 20 years of experience in applied mathematics to his credit, Patterson joined Renaissance Technologies,
a Manhattan-based hedge fund. In a Long Island office, he developed predictive mathematical models of the stock market. His new role meant that he had to learn the language of finance, but it also eventually erased, for life, any money worries he once had.

“I had a lot of experience building mathematical models for complicated data,” said Patterson. “The transition didn’t feel technically that hard.” To forecast the market, he employed the same statistical methods cryptographers use to break codes. During his eight years at the hedge fund, its assets shot from $200 million to $4 billion; the worst year returned 21 percent to investors after fees.

Taking On Biology
By 1999, Patterson was restless and eager for an intellectual challenge. He sat at his desk one day and asked himself, What’s the most interesting data in the world? “I decided it probably had to be something in biology,” he said. “People were beginning to learn how the cells work, were beginning to generate DNA sequences, and were grappling with consequential issues of human health that depended in part on big data. Really important, complicated problems.”

In 2001, he bought a house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to be near a new job at the Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research, which in 2004 became the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard. Patterson joined the world of biology and big data in earnest. At the Broad, he is a senior computational biologist and a scholar of medical and population genetics. For 15 years, he has helped tell the story of human history through DNA. All this, and Patterson has never taken a single biology course. Ever buoyant and confident, he is unfazed by that. “As a child and to this day,” he said, “I’m a competitive person.”

During an early “sub-transition” into cancer bioinformatics, Patterson attended a lecture by David Reich, a young population geneticist captivated by the intersection of human history and biology. Patterson was immediately captivated too. This pursuit, after all, surely had a place for an experienced cryptographer ready to take on the big-data challenges of genetic code.

Since that day in the lecture hall, Reich and Patterson and others have probed DNA, using population genetics originally to look for genetically based disease risks but more recently to learn about human history. They found, for instance, that modern Eurasians share about 2 percent of their genetic makeup with Neanderthals, an admixture that most likely helped humans coming out of Africa adapt to unfamiliar Eurasian conditions.

Patterson deciphers genetics by using mathematical models, computer algorithms, and statistical pattern recognition—techniques he once used as a secret foot soldier during the Cold War. But this time he can speak up. “I’m working on ancient DNA data,” he said, “trying to get a story out of it.”

Corydon Ireland is a freelance writer based in Washington State.

“I liked doing math because I was good at it. I could beat the other guys.” Patterson also had an early interest in history and remembered wondering, “Why is the world the way it is now?”
Beyond the “Zero Book”

MOLLY ANTOPOL’S NEW OLD-FASHIONED STORIES

MOLLY ANTOPOL RI ’17 ALWAYS WANTED to be a writer, “but” she says, “it seemed so pie-in-the-sky.” She lived in Connecticut with her hardworking single mom until she was five, when they moved to Los Angeles. “To say I wanted to be a writer would have been like saying I wanted to be an astronaut or a magician.” With the publication of The UnAmericans (Norton, 2014), a book of short stories, she succeeded in creating a world of activists, artists, and academics, living in places as varied as Ukraine, Los Angeles, and Israel, many of them caught between the modern world and older realities, struggling to make sense of both. The eight stories, which took 10 years to write, are old-fashioned in the best sense of the word, delving deeply into characters and situations and places. Antopol’s early life may not have pointed toward her later success, but her experiences provided material for the worlds she renders on paper.
Molly Antopol in her office in Byerly Hall
**Reprint from The UnAmericans**

There and back again. As Eva Kaplan moved through the crowd in a silky pantsuit, a cocktail in hand, wearing what appeared to be all of her gold at once. The exhibits went on in the living room, but displayed throughout Eva’s home was the permanent collection amassed over a lifetime: the Picassos and Legers bought for a pittance back in the thirties, when she was still a young and ambitious art student in Paris; the Kotins and Gottliebs she’d begun collecting in the fifties during her years in New York; and, of course, the works that had made her as famous in her circle as the painters themselves: the hundreds of pieces she’d smuggled out of Russia, right up to the fall of the Curtain.

The art, her friends admitted, wasn’t always that great. Of course the whole point, one friend said, was that it was supposed to be edgy and political, but there was no getting around how unappetizing it was to stare at a canvas of Nikita Khrushchev in a compromising position each morning over breakfast. Other pieces had been virtually destroyed by the time Eva exhibited them. It was hard to know if the poor quality had to do with the fact that the artists often worked with anything they could scavenge off the streets, mud and trash and auto paint, or if it was the shoddy way Eva had packed them, so that by the time the smuggled art made it through customs at Ben Gurion and was unveiled on her wall, the canvases, which sometimes weren’t canvases at all but paper bags or burlap sacks, were so faded and torn it was hard to see what the artist’s original intent had been. Still, friends insisted it wasn’t simply the work one bought but the stories that went along with it. Eva had sneaked out several of Litnikov’s now-famous camp paintings and, more than anyone, had promoted Mikhail Borovsky’s work throughout the U.S. and Israel. Borovsky had been one of Russia’s best-known painters under communism and internationally prized even after his death a few years ago, possibly the only member of the Artists Union the unofficial artists had respected back then, the only one, they’d said, able to think craftily within the constraining box of Socialist Realism—the only one, as Eva had said, who didn’t think membership was so important that she thought I had to figure out a way to do this.” But it took a while.

The day she graduated from college, she moved to Israel, where she had previously studied at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. This time, she worked at an immigrant absorption center in the south with Russian and Chechen kids and with an environmental group in Jerusalem. Then she worked with a human rights group and started to do grant writing, something in her mother’s field. “Again, I felt like this made sense within my family and was really important work,” Antopol says. “I didn’t have time to write fiction, but I felt very strongly about what I was doing.”

Antopol wondered, though, if she could ever find a way to write without also devoting herself to a job. She thought of academia. Unable to decide between a master’s in Middle Eastern studies and an MFA in writing, she applied to Columbia University, where she could study both. “That way,” she says, “I could take all my electives in Middle Eastern subjects.” Writing won out, however, and she got a scholarship, earning her MFA in 2004.

During graduate school, Antopol worked mostly on what she considered her “zero book,” a collection of short stories that she never showed to anybody outside her workshops and never sent out for publication. She wrote to learn how to write. “Then, when I had put that book very firmly in the drawer,” she says, “I started on The UnAmericans.”

After completing her MFA at Columbia, Antopol stayed in New York for two years and worked at several jobs. Then living with her now-husband, the nonfiction writer Chanan Tigay—author of The Lost Book of Moses: The Hunt for the World’s Oldest Bible (Ecco, 2016)—Antopol worked in a high school teaching program, did some medical writing, and at night taught English as a second language. But she was broke and frazzled. She and Tigay considered moving to Israel, where they both had job contacts and it was cheaper to live. Before they had time to plan a move, though, she was awarded a Wallace Stegner Fellowship in Fiction at Stanford in 2006. She worked on many of the stories in The UnAmericans in her workshop there, and the book was published to wide praise. Since 2008, Antopol has taught at Stanford, where she’s currently the Jones Lecturer of Creative Writing.
for her mother and her mother’s siblings to live under so much surveillance. Although “Duck and Cover” and other early stories were inspired by family history, she says, it’s the situation—not the characters—that she drew from her family: “I was trying to understand that time period, which I think will be endlessly fascinating to me throughout my writing life.”

Unlike many short-story writers, Antopol spends a lot of time researching and imagining her characters’ backstories. She knows the period she’s writing about—its history and politics—before she ever begins to write. And she knows her characters’ entire lives, from birth to death. “I try to isolate in the story what the most fraught and interesting moments are in their lives,” she says, “that hold the most tension.”

Antopol is now at work on a novel titled “The After Party”—which she describes as being “about surveillance and privacy and the secrets we keep from the people closest to us.” She won’t divulge much more about her new project except to say that she’s doing lots of research and the novel is expanding in exciting ways.

From the looks of her office in Byerly Hall, Antopol—who is the 2016–2017 Lisa Goldberg Fellow at Radcliffe—is working productively: stacks of papers cover the table adjacent to her desk. Just having the space to spread out her books and papers is a luxury, she says. In the San Francisco apartment she shared with her husband and daughter, Nell, now 20 months old, Antopol’s writing desk was also her daughter’s changing table. Living in Cambridge is enjoyable, Antopol says, partly because it’s home to many of her favorite writers, including Radcliffe alumnae Allegra Goodman ’89, RI ’09, Gish Jen ’77, BI ’87, RI ’02, Margot Livesey RI ’13, and Claire Messud RI ’05. And across the river in Brookline is a writer she says she “looked to a lot” when she was writing her book—Edith Pearlman ’57. “Her stories are character-based and psychologically driven,” Antopol says, “but you can feel this larger political and historical landscape pushing down on people.” Sounds like the stories in The UnAmericans.
Selectivity Is the Soul of Wit

ONLY ANN PATCHETT COULD TURN a sprawling multi-generational saga into a fresh, riveting tale that seems to take no time at all to read. Her winning technique is selectivity, which she employs with a sure hand, as if the stories she chooses to tell were made up of her own indelible memories.

Writing always in the third person, Patchett nevertheless gives diverse points of view on the origins and evolution of a blended family forged from a painful double divorce in early-1960s Los Angeles. These were the days of easy southern California living, when fruit plucked from backyard orange trees supplied hand-squeezed juice for screwdrivers and Popsicle molds alike, calming and cooling in heat unmitigated by air conditioning. Commonwealth opens in such a backyard with the celebration of a christening with family and friends at a crowded house-and-garden party where Patchett’s roving authorial eye lights on three of the four principals of the older generation: the baby’s parents, Fix (Francis Xavier) and Beverly Keating, and Bert Cousins, police officer Fix Keating’s superior in the DA’s office. Here, the first sparks fly between Beverly and Bert, a married father of three-soon-to-be-four, preparing readers for a bitter (though off stage) end to two families’ citrus-drenched idylls.

Bert may be the snake who entered the Keatings’ paradise, but Patchett finds sympathy for all her characters, all of them burdened by family life, whether adult or child. This Eden wasn’t really so Edenic, we learn, and Patchett understands that lying “deftly” can be an admirable survival skill under the right circumstances, the precursor to deft storytelling.

“What a difference a day makes,” Bert’s ex-wife Teresa, the mother of his children, sings in tough times, quoting a Dinah Washington song; and she’s proved right repeatedly, as love and disaster strike in equal measure. It’s not stolen love that propels the tale but an accident involving one of the six children of the two merged families. All are unmoored, and Patchett’s narrative of sparse moments but many strands demonstrates that while living with loss is the essential fact of humanity, there is no single way to absorb that fact. As the younger generation grows up into sharper focus, the pull of family connection becomes dominant at last, an important and hard-won corrective to the broken bonds in childhood. Now death comes at a measured pace, a third generation begins—and Commonwealth reaches its stirring conclusion. We’re sorry when it’s over.

In the Darkroom

by Susan Faludi ’81, RI ’09

In 2004, the Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist Susan Faludi turned her investigative skills on a man she “scarcely knew”: her father. By the end of a seven-year journey of discovery, Stefánia Faludi—born István Karoly Friedman in Hungary in 1927 and known as Steven Faludi through nearly four decades of residence in the United States as a fashion photo developer and autocratic family man—will tell her daughter, “You know more about my life than I do.”

If the pronoun in that sentence is confusing, imagine the disturbance when Susan learned by e-mail that her long-estranged father, who’d returned to Hungary after the fall of communism and a bitter divorce from her mother, had undergone sex-reassignment surgery at age 76. Out of a 25-year silence came the announcement “Now I am completely like a woman.”

Susan Faludi, who writes of a childhood Nancy Drew fixation that drove her to become an ace reporter before turning to cultural critique in her best-selling Backlash: The Undeclared War against American Women (Crown, 1991), masters yet another literary genre in this stunning family memoir, which quickly leaves its sensational starting point for a deep exploration of identity formation.
Mercury: A Novel  
by Margot Livesey RI ’13  

Mercury is neither god nor element but a horse in this contemporary morality fable, the first of the Scotland-born-and-bred writer Margot Livesey’s eight novels to be set entirely in the United States. Yet the thoroughbred’s surprise arrival in the small Massachusetts town where the diffidently married Donald and Viv have settled with their two children proves consequential in ways none of Mercury’s passionate admirers could have anticipated. Even Donald, wary of the horse from the outset, is too preoccupied with his work as an optometrist and with mourning his recently deceased father to look up and into the dark future ahead.

“People make decisions in lots of different ways,” observes Mercury’s owner, who has boarded the horse at Windy Hill, the stable where Viv, once a successful mutual fund professional, has formed a business partnership with a childhood friend. “Only a few of them rational.” Divided into three sections, the first and third narrated by Donald, the centerpiece by Viv, whose adolescent dreams of equestrian glory have been dangerously revived, Mercury offers plenty of evidence that choices just happen more often than they are deliberately made—the result of accident, indecision, and most powerful of all, unbidden desire.

Admit One: An American Scrapbook  
by Martha Collins BI ’83  
University of Pittsburgh Press, 89 pp.

When Martha Collins includes documentary end-notes and footnotes to the poems in her latest collection, Admit One: An American Scrapbook, it is not, as with T.S. Eliot in “The Waste Land,” to source obscure literary references, without which Eliot’s epic was nearly unintelligible. Collins’s message is plain, legible without resorting to back matter: look at what white Americans did to black Africans and African Americans—captured, fetishized, ghettoized, and worse—during the first decades of the 20th century, when slavery was supposed to be a half-century gone.

Still, Collins wants us to know this really happened. And so we learn, in both poems and source note, of Ota Benga, the pygmy captured and put on display at the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair, and then transferred to New York’s Museum of Natural History and finally to the Bronx Zoo, and of further incidents, victims, and perpetrators in what became a hellish rush toward the passage of anti-immigration, anti-miscegenation, and eugenic sterilization laws in the 1920s. Collins’s brilliantly disturbing verse leaves us with the grim hope that imperial whiteness can give way to incendiary witness.

The Girl at the Baggage Claim: Explaining the East-West Culture Gap  
by Gish Jen ’77, BI ’87, RI ’02  
Knopf, 335 pp.

Picking up where she left off in Tiger Writing: Art, Culture, and the Interdependent Self (Harvard University Press, 2013), an exploration of differing propensities for storytelling in Asia and the North America in which she grew up in a Chinese immigrant family, Gish Jen now takes a close look at what appear to be opposite styles of identity formation in East and West. At first her proposition—that Americans are individualists, Asians collectivists—seems unsurprising, but Jen’s analysis, based on the latest research and studded with fascinating anecdotes, is far more complex, nuanced, and generous-hearted than the dichotomy suggests.

Arguing finally for a merging of the opposites in a “flexi-self” or “amibependence,” The Girl at the Baggage Claim (which takes its name from an incident in which a Chinese family allowed a daughter proficient in English to win a place at Milton Academy for a younger sister less skilled in the language) encourages wide-ranging empathy and points the way to a more fluid future derived from the “meetings and mixings” that are spreading across the globe, no longer peculiar to melting-pot America—if they ever were.

Capone: His Life, Legacy, and Legend  
by Deirdre Bair BI ’82  

After landmark biographies of Simone de Beauvoir, Samuel Beckett, Carl Jung, and Anaïs Nin, why Al Capone? Deirdre Bair opens with a catalog of the notorious gangster’s criminal personae: “a ruthless killer, a scofflaw, a keeper of brothels and bordellos, a tax cheat and perpetrator of frauds, a convicted felon.” But Bair’s interviews with surviving relatives, which in some key respects alter the established narrative, persuaded the biographer that the man was also “a loving son, husband, and father . . . a businessman whose job was to serve the people what they wanted.” Those same relatives believe that Alphonse Capone, as he was born in 1899, would have become a straight-arrow Manhattan burgher if it weren’t for his father’s early death, which left the 21-year-old supporting his large family in Brooklyn.

Al had already begun working for the mob boss Johnny Torrio, whom he later followed to Chicago, at age 15. Could that have led anywhere “good”? It’s the apparently contradictory records of the private and the public man that drew Bair to this American tall tale in a wish to reconcile—or better yet, entertain—the two at once, in what she admits is “a curious hybrid of a book.” The result is undeniably entertaining.
By coincidence, the long-planned event was held the same day that Harvard announced its men’s soccer season had been canceled after disclosure of the team’s “scouting report” ranking the physical attractiveness of Harvard’s women soccer players. “How sad is it that the focus of the *New York Times* coverage of Harvard women’s soccer is that they are defending themselves against a juvenile, sexist attack,” Peterson lamented. “We owe them more than that.”

Peterson, a resident scholar in journalism at Harvard’s Lowell House, noted that not even elite female athletes are immune from discrimination.

Despite athletic gains, women lose out on media coverage.

A timely Radcliffe Institute panel discussion held last fall during the Harvard Alumni Association Women’s Weekend gave attendees a chance to consider the role of women athletes and fans in the still male-dominated realm of professional and college sports. Dean Lizabeth Cohen introduced “Hits and Misses: Sports Marketing, Gender, and Society” by noting that despite numerous gains by women athletes over the past few decades, they “continue to face disparities in pay, endorsement deals, and media coverage.”

The moderator, Janet Rich-Edwards ’84, SD ’95, faculty codirector of the Institute’s science program, introduced the panelists. Drawing on his experience as a former ESPN Boston.com writer and editor, Daniel Peterson ’02 suggested that when it comes to winning recognition, respect, and financial rewards in sports, women’s strength can also be a weakness. “There’s a disparity in how we look at athletes’ physical prowess,” he observed. “While we celebrate male athletes’ bodies for their incredible function, female bodies are still judged on attractiveness and sex appeal.”

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in grand slam tourneys forced the issue.

Shira Springer ’97, a columnist on women’s sports at the Boston Globe and a sports and society reporter for NPR, spoke about “the built-in bias against women’s team sports” in newspapers crowded with coverage of men’s professional and college hockey, football, basketball, and baseball. “When you’re dealing with women and sports and marketing, you constantly have to prove that there’s an audience out there,” she said.

Sometimes, Springer added, that requires “coming around from the outside.” Rejected by Globe sports editors, two of her early articles on women’s team sports ran instead in the Sunday magazine section, where they were widely read and generated an extraordinary number of comments and clicks. Noting that the Globe sports editors were male and the magazine editors were women, Springer observed, “When it comes to content, women in the decision-making process make a huge difference. They see underserved markets where we can make a big impact.”

In her work as a data analyst and marketing strategist, the panelist Jessica C. Gelman ’97, MBA ’02 has been looking at one of those underserved markets: female fans of predominately male sports. As CEO of KAGR (Kraft Analytics Group), Gelman has helped the New England Patriots NFL franchise reinvent its approach to women.

“As we started looking at our customers’ clicks, e-mails, ticket buying, and online purchases, we began to get a better idea about who we were and weren’t serving,”

Based on their appearance. The tennis stars Maria Sharapova and Serena Williams, the only two women on the Forbes list of the 100 highest-paid sports figures, “have faced criticism and dismissive attitudes that men in their position haven’t had to deal with,” he observed. “Serena because of her race and body type,” and Sharapova recognized only for her clothing and appearance until her numerous victories.
Gelman said. Data and focus groups indicated that many women—and a surprising number of men—“didn’t really care if the team had played a nickel defense or a zone defense,” but were instead interested in players’ lives and personalities.

This research led to the launch of “Patriots Lifestyle,” offering online coverage of content such as players’ off-field activities. Gelman said that a new shopping venue at the team’s stadium featuring merchandise for women and children has tripled the sales of a pro shop previously in that location.

“We are being more welcoming to all our fans, and it has had a positive effect.”

Deborah Blagg

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Announcement of Spring Conference

A conference on April 6 and 7 will provide an expanded look at many of the themes introduced in “Hits and Misses.” The degree to which sports—broadly defined—permeates societies and cultures has never been greater, making it a revealing lens through which to understand many contemporary issues. “Game Changers: Sports, Gender, and Society” will explore the relationship between sports and gender in the United States and around the world.

The conference will begin with a discussion and an evening performance from a work-in-progress by the playwright Lydia R. Diamond RI ’13, based on a book by the historian Martha Ackmann RI ’09 about Toni Stone, the first woman to play professional baseball on Negro League men’s teams in the 1950s.

The agenda for the following day will include a keynote conversation with Laila Ali—the four-time undefeated super-middleweight boxing world champion, a fitness and wellness expert, and an author—along with panel discussions with athletes, business leaders, coaches, physicians, policymakers, and scholars on such topics as access and inclusion, health and medical research, and media and popular culture.

“Game Changers” will be free, open to the public, and webcast live on the Institute’s website at www.radcliffe.harvard.edu.
 fellows can display their creative works in a beautiful, state-of-the-art gallery.

The campaign is also funding the Robert G. James Scholar at Risk Fellowships, which bring scholars from around the world to conduct research at the Institute. Claudia Escobar, a former appellate judge in Guatemala and the James Scholar at Risk in 2015–2016, grew up in a country marked by corruption and violence and dedicated her life to the promotion of justice. At Radcliffe, she used Guatemala as an example in her research of how corruption is linked to a lack of judicial independence.

The James Scholar at Risk for 2016–2017 is Lubo Teferi Kerorsa, who has been a lecturer in law at several universities in Ethiopia, where he contributed to the expansion of legal education. At Radcliffe, he is studying the challenges faced by the Oromo people, the single largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, which has historically suffered from discrimination, including limited access to education and economic opportunity.

Campaign co-chair Sidney R. Knafel ’52, MBA ’54 recently acknowledged the impact of the Institute’s achievements. “The Radcliffe Institute consistently makes pioneering scholarly contributions and serves as a catalyst for bringing disparate parts of Harvard together,” he says. “I am but one in a rapidly expanding band of people who respect the Institute’s progress and its promise. I encourage all to be part of this invaluable group.”
American Amnesia: Forgetting What Made Us Prosper

Jacob S. Hacker, the Stanley B. Resor Professor of Political Science and the director of the Institute for Social and Policy Studies at Yale University, considers the importance of an effective public sector to America’s health, wealth, and well-being—and why that perspective is so rare among many of our economic and political leaders.

Calm. Smoke Rises Vertically.

An opening discussion accompanied a multi-sensory exhibition by the independent artist Wendy Jacob—the 2004–2005 Mary I. Bunting Institute Fellow—that incorporated such elements as architectural models and vibrating walls.

Next in Science: Astronomy and Astrophysics

This series brought together four early-career scientists who focus on the frontiers of astronomy and astrophysics. One of the speakers was Cora Dvorkin, recently named a Shutzer Assistant Professor at the Radcliffe Institute and an assistant professor of physics in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.
The Role of Ethics in Political Art

A Cuban artist and the 2016–2017 Elizabeth S. and Richard M. Cashin Fellow at Radcliffe, Tania Bruguera has changed political discourse in her home country through her integration of art into everyday life.

Protecting People from the Ocean and the Ocean from People

In this talk, a US Coast Guard captain and commander review how the Coast Guard strikes a balance when it comes to maritime safety, security, environmental protection, and maritime commerce amid changing climate conditions.

Marian Anderson and the Desegregation of the American Concert Stage

Carol J. Oja, the 2016–2017 Frieda L. Miller Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute and the William Powell Mason Professor of Music at Harvard, introduces us to the 20th-century singer who paved the way for other African Americans in the arts.
Honor Roll

Andrew Strominger ’77, RI ’13, the Gwill E. York Professor of Physics at Harvard, won a Breakthrough Prize in fundamental physics for his work in quantum field theory, string theory, and quantum gravity. Breakthrough Prizes are awarded by the billionaire cofounders of Alibaba, Facebook, and Google in the areas of physics, life sciences, and math.

Ben Miller RI ’15 won a Leadership and Service Award from his undergraduate alma mater, Cornell College. The school recognized him for his contributions to American literature and his work as a Cornell ambassador. In November, Miller gave an update on his Mural Speaks! project via the Argus Leader: translations of “The Red Wheel Barrow” in only 50 languages are left to complete his project.

Taking the Gold(en Lion)

The Woman Who Left (Ang Babaeng Humayo) (2016), the latest film written and directed by Lav Diaz RI ’17, won the Golden Lion at the 73rd Venice International Film Festival. Diaz shot the film himself; it tells the story of a schoolteacher wrongly imprisoned for 30 years. “This is for my country, for the Filipino people, for our struggle, for the struggle of humanity,” he said while accepting the award for best picture—only a few days before his arrival on campus.

The film, which Diaz based on Leo Tolstoy’s short story “God Sees the Truth, but Waits,” also screened at the Toronto International Film Festival. A Variety review declared, “Diaz fashions a thoughtful, far from idealistic meditation on the complex nature of forgiveness and shifting moral accountability—with the government, shown demolishing makeshift communities while letting others fester in poverty and fear, its most consistent antagonist.”
The writer Junot Díaz RI ’04 was honored with the literature award this past fall at the 29th Hispanic Heritage Awards. Accepting the award, the Pulitzer Prize–winning author of The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (Riverhead Books, 2007) said, “We have to fight for justice; we have to fight for equality. . . . all of us must be free, or none.” In a conversation with Vox.com, the writer also discussed the importance of the humanities, saying, “The humanities is an education for the soul. I think it’s absolutely indispensable.”

The 2016 Kirkus Prize in nonfiction went to Susan Faludi ’81, RI ’09 for her memoir In the Darkroom (Metropolitan Books, 2016—see the review on page 32). The judges chose the winners—one each in fiction, young readers’ literature, and nonfiction—from more than 1,100 books that received a starred review from Kirkus Reviews in the previous year.

Rosie Rios ’87—a Radcliffe Institute visiting scholar who served as the 43rd treasurer of the United States—received the 2016 WNBA Inspiration Award, presented at a luncheon in New York City this past fall. The award, says the WNBA, “recognizes individuals who have blazed new paths on the court, in the boardroom and in the community.”

The Hollywood Film Festival—which has as its mission to single out books “worthy of further consideration by the talent-hungry pipeline of the entertainment industry”—bestowed a 2016 honorable mention on Audry Lynch ’55 for her biography Garth Jeffers Recalls His Father, Robinson Jeffers: Recollections of a Poet’s Son (Edwin Mellen Press, 2012). Lynch earned a previous honorable mention in 2014, for her biography The Rebel Figure in American Literature and Film: The Interconnected Lives of John Steinbeck and James Dean (Edwin Mellen Press, 2009).

Ursula K. Le Guin ’51 joined a very short list of writers—including Saul Bellow, Philip Roth, and Eudora Welty—who were living when they got the news that the Library of America would publish them. The New York Times talked to her about it for “Ursula Le Guin Has Earned a Rare Honor. Just Don’t Call Her a Sci-Fi Writer.” The article revealed that the first volume to be published will contain some of her earlier, lesser-known work—none of it science fiction. The New Yorker also ran a lengthy profile this past fall, titled “The Fantastic Ursula K. Le Guin.”

In honor of the pioneering molecular biologist Susan Lindquist PhD ’77, RI ’08, Johnson & Johnson has established the Susan Lindquist Chair for Women in Science. The post is endowed in perpetuity at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research and will be awarded to a woman scientist to advance biomedical research. Lindquist studied how proteins change shape during cell division—a process called protein folding—in an effort to understand such degenerative diseases as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s. She died at age 67 this past October.

The Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities recently recognized Lia G. Poorvu AM ’64 with a 2016 Governor’s Award in the Humanities. In a video tribute, Governor Charlie Baker praised her for enriching the state’s cultural landscape. Poorvu is a member of the Schlesinger Library Council.

In the New York Times opinion piece “Standing Up to a Strongman,” the writer Miguel Syjuco RI ’14 wrote about the many protests that have taken place in the Philippines since the election of President Rodrigo Duterte. Earlier, he published “A Hero’s Burial for a Long-Dead Dictator,” which explored Duterte’s decision to transfer the dictator Ferdinand Marcos’s body to the Cemetery of Heroes in the capital of Manila—an act that sparked some of the protests. Syjuco is a visiting assistant professor of practice of literature and creative writing at New York University Abu Dhabi.

Ann Patchett BI ’94, a co-owner of Parnassus Books in Nashville, Tennessee, published an article about her favorite destination bookshops in the New York Times Travel section. “Ann Patchett’s Guide for Bookstore Lovers” catalogs the writer’s picks across the United States—three of which are in Harvard Square. Earlier, she published “Collecting Strays at the Thanksgiving Table” in the Times, in which she reminisced about hosting her first Thanksgiving away from home—in her dorm kitchen as a college freshman.

Khalil Gibran Muhammad RI ’17 gave a postelection address at Holden Chapel, on the Harvard campus, which he later published in the Nation under the title “We Are Donald Trump.” In it, he argued that we must all take responsibility for our society. “We are the weavers of our destiny, the loom is our society, our democracy, our humanity,” he wrote. “We bear responsibility for the whole cloth, for all the threads that bind us, one to another.”

In the latest installment of his New Yorker
Paris diary, “Street of the Iron Po(e)t, Part XVII,” Henri Cole RI ’16 proclaims his love for the city and his many experiences there.

Edward Ball RI ’17 visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture shortly after it opened. In an article titled “At Last, a Black History Museum,” he shared what he found there—and how it dovetailed with his own past.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie RI ’12 did a Paris diary, “Street of the Iron Po(e)t, Part XVII,” and a New York Review of Books, he shared what he found there—and how it dovetailed with his own past.

In a Boston Review article titled “To Remake the World: Slavery, Racial Capitalism, and Justice,” Walter Johnson AM ’06, RI ’11—the Winthrop Professor of History and a professor of African and African American studies at Harvard—considered “our own histories of perpetration.”

In a New Yorker special section, “Aftermath: Sixteen Writers on Trump’s America,” Junot Díaz RI ’04, Mary Karr RI ’91, and Jill LePORE RI ’00 were among those who reacted to the president-elect with essays tackling personal concerns.

Rebecca Mercuri RI ’05, an expert in the field of computer security with a special focus on election systems, recently lent her expertise to Bloomberg News, which quoted her in the article “When Voting Machines Misbehave.” Mercuri spent her year at the Institute researching aspects of transparency and trust in digital systems. “If you’re really close election, you’re looking at a crapshoot.”

In “Big Food Strikes Back: Why Did the Obamas Fail to Take on Corporate Agriculture?” the writer and activist Michael Pollan RI ’16 detailed eight years of agricultural policy in the Obama administration. The article was part of a larger series, Can Big Food Change?, that appeared in the New York Times Magazine.


The political scientist Alex Gourevitch ’00, RI ’17, with his colleague Suresh Naidu, published “Graduate-Student Unions Mean Good News for Professors, Too” in the Chronicle of Higher Education.

In Smithsonian magazine’s “The Powerful Objects from the Collections of the Smithsonian’s Newest Museum,” writers and other public figures reacted to 19 artifacts from the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Natasha Trethewey RI ’01 contributed a lyrical response to an artifact from the civil rights era: shards of stained glass in the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Jane Jacob’s Street Museum,” the writer and activist Michael Pollan RI ’16 detailed eight years of agricultural policy in the Obama administration. The article was part of a larger series, Can Big Food Change?, that appeared in the New York Times Magazine.

Sage Stossel, whose current cartoon work can be found at www.sagestossel.com, served as the Radcliffe Quarterly’s New Books editor from Spring 2004 to Winter 2007.
A Poetic Life


Last fall, Marshall offered a preview of the book when she published “Elizabeth and Alice”—about Bishop’s last love affair, with Alice Methfessel—in the New Yorker.

narrow,” wrote the authors. “Children entering kindergarten today are more equally prepared than they were in the late 1990s.”

Margot Livesey RI ’13 took part in a Bibliophiles Q and A for the Boston Globe titled “Looking for Characters You Can Dive Into,” in which she dished on her recent great reads and what books she took along on her book tour (see a review of her latest novel on page 33).

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson RI ’12 explored questions of disability in the public sphere during her fellowship year at Radcliffe. Her essay “Becoming Disabled” was the first in a New York Times series about living with disability in America.

Shelf Life

Viet Thanh Nguyen RI ’09 has continued his breakneck publishing schedule with a collection of stories titled The Refugees (Grove, 2017). He discussed his memories of becoming a refugee at the age of four in the New York Times article “The Hidden Scars All Refugees Carry,” connecting his experiences with the current plight of Syrian refugees. In “Trump Is a Great Storyteller. We Need to Be Better,” which also appeared in the New York Times, he wrote about the necessity of breaking down barriers through stories. Nguyen’s nonfiction book Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War (Harvard University Press, 2016), on which he worked during his fellowship, was a finalist for a 2016 National Book Award.

In Traditional Korean Ceramics: A Look by a Scientist (Designnanoom, 2016), Carolyn Kyongshin Koh Choo ’69 has produced a unique book that combines science with ceramics history. The scientific analysis presented in the book is the result of three decades of research undertaken in her laboratory at Chung-Ang University, in Seoul.

Zadie Smith RI ’03 has published a new novel, Swing Time (Penguin Press, 2016), which Esquire called “a sweeping meditation on art, race, and identity that may be her most ambitious work yet.” T Magazine featured Smith in its Greats issue, and Jeffrey Eugenides wrote the accompanying profile, “The Pieces of Zadie Smith.”

Pull Me Under (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2016) is the debut novel of Kelly Luce RI ’17. In an NPR book review, Bethanne Patrick called it “a suspense novel with a female protagonist that gets more right about women than so many others I’ve read in the past few years.” In a New York Magazine article titled “Truth, Lies, and Videotape”—part of a series called The Vindicated—Luce recalled the personal experience that inspired a portion of her novel.
Constance Merritt RI ’02 has published a fourth poetry collection, *Blind Girl Grunt: The Selected Blues Lyrics and Other Poems* (Headmistress Press, 2017). The title refers to an alias used by Janice Ian when recording for *Broadside* magazine.

Nancy Weiss Malkiel AM ’66, PhD ’70 published “Keep the Damned Women Out”: *The Struggle for Coeducation* (Princeton University Press, 2016), in which she details the transition to coeducation at elite colleges and universities in the United States and the United Kingdom. Her research relied on the Radcliffe College Archives, at the Schlesinger Library. In December, Malkiel appeared on the *Economist*’s podcast, in a segment titled “What Made the World’s Great Universities Let Women In?”


Sabina Murray BI ’00 has a new book out, *Valiant Gentlemen: A Novel* (Grove Press, 2016), based on 40 years in the lives of the real-life Irish humanitarian Roger Casement and his closest friend, Herbert Ward. In a starred review, *Publishers Weekly* said the novel is “brimming with exquisite detail and clever humor,” and the *Washington Post* said Murray “has a knack for alluding to the era’s public events and concerns in a manner that lets us understand their impact and influence without her laboring over their details—an indispensable gift for a historical novelist.”

Betty Fussell AM ’51 published a 12th book, titled *Eat, Live, Love, Die: Selected Essays* (Counterpoint Press, 2016). “A restless intelligence and energy pulses under the surface of these essays, even when the topic is as banal as the deliciousness of French chicken,” said the *Washington Post* in a review. “Whatever the subject at hand, Fussell meets the chief requirement of the essayist: She’s good company. Opinionated and sometimes caustic, she moves easily from high to low, from the scholarly to the deeply personal.”

The special advisor to the dean at the Institute, Chandra Manning AM ’97, PhD ’02, has published *Troubled Refuge: Struggling for Freedom in the Civil War* (Knopf, 2016). The book—which centers on the importance of Union contraband camps, in which escaped slaves were offered refuge during the Civil War—received starred reviews from *Booklist* and *Kirkus Reviews*. “Manning’s book tells us a sobering yet uplifting story of the journey toward freedom,” said a *Wall Street Journal* review. “In her superb telling we learn something invaluable about the fragile and chaotic nature of the coming of freedom and the enduring dignity and courage of the people who secured it.”

Karen Rosen PhD ’84, BI ’98 has published *Social and Emotional Development: Attachment Relationships and the Emerging Self* (Palgrave Macmillian, 2016). In alternating chapters, she explores key theories and current research on developing attachments and aspects of the self, from infancy through adolescence and emerging adulthood—all while addressing controversial issues and highlighting unanswered questions. Rosen is an associate professor at Boston College, where she teaches courses in developmental and clinical psychology.

In *The 9/11 Generation: Youth, Rights, and Solidarity in the War on Terror* (NYU Press, 2016), Sunaina Marr Maira ’91, EdM ’94, EdD ’98 explores how Afghan American, Arab American, and South Asian American youth engage with the political. The author Vijay Prashad called the book “an ethnography with teeth—gripping and urgent.” Maira is a professor of Asian American studies at the University of California, Davis.

Alexandra Chasin BI ’97, an associate professor of literary studies at Eugene Lang College, the New School, has published *Assassin of Youth: A Kaleidoscopic History of Harry J. Anslinger’s War on Drugs* (University of Chicago Press, 2016). *Nature* called the book, about the United States’ little-known first drug czar, “A sorry tale of how one man’s racial prejudice and predilection for prohibition...
led to a colossal policy failure.” Chasin is the author of several books of fiction and nonfiction.

- Part fairy tale, Little Nothing (Blue Rider Press, 2016) is the latest novel from Marisa Silver ’82, which Booklist called “a gorgeously rendered, imaginative, magical yarn.” Silver also published a New Yorker essay, “William Trevor’s Quiet Explosions,” in which she reflected on the late writer, saying, “I can still summon the emotional jolt and the riveting sense of fiction’s possibilities that Trevor’s humane, wry, frank, and often melancholy worldview excited in me.”

- Set on Martha’s Vineyard, Split Rock: A Novel (Conzett Verlag, 2016) is the debut of Holly Hodder Eger ’82. Kirkus Reviews said, “This well-written work benefits from the heroine’s admirable willingness to examine herself honestly.”

Marianne Kimura ’87 has published a second novel under the pen name Gemma Nishiyama. The Hamlet Paradigm (CreateSpace, 2016) is a paranormal eco-thriller set in the Iga region of Japan, where ninjas used to train. Kimura—who is a faculty member in the Department of English Studies at Kyoto Women’s University in Japan—uses her academic research in the novel: Shakespeare, his famous play, and the ideas of Giordano Bruno figure in the story.

Outside the Asylum: Tales of War, Disaster and Human Psychiatry (W&N, 2017), the memoir that the child psychologist and relief worker Lynne Jones R1 ’11 tackled during her research year, will be published in the United Kingdom in early summer.

Marjorie Ingall ’89 has published Mama-Leh Knows Best: What Jewish Mothers Do to Raise Successful, Creative, Empathetic, Independent Children (Harmony Books, 2016), a humorous take on the best practices of Jewish mothering. “If you’re a parent—even one who gave birth before the really cool strollers were invented—you’ll find infinite insight, brilliant advice, and plenty of laughter here,” said a Real Simple review.

An independent scholar who specializes in late medieval and Renaissance Italy and has worked in museums and academia, Amee Yunn ’93 has published The Bargello Palace: The Invention of Civic Architecture in Florence (Brepols Publishers, 2016). The book is a revised in-depth building history of the first town hall of Florence.

On Stage and Screen


Anne Whitehouse ’76 has published a poetry collection titled Meteor Shower (Dos Madres Press, 2016). Garrison Keillor read one of the poems, “One Summer Day on the Number One Train,” on the radio show The Writer’s Almanac.

I Want to Be Famous (Saturn’s Moons Press, 2016) is the latest picture book for the general public by Bracha Goetz ’77. It tells the whimsical story of a boy who breaks his habit of seeking the spotlight as he learns about his own inner radiance.

Caroline H. Williams ’57, AM ’66 tells the story of eight talented and adventurous women in her family—five of whom attended Radcliffe College in the early 20th century—in Lives in Letters: A New England Family, 1870–2000 (CreateSpace, 2016). Some of the letters that provide the narrative were inherited by the writer, but others were discovered in a goat shed in the Berlin suburbs. The family biography is illustrated with 38 images, which include family photos and works of art.
Those remembered moments that shape our lives: a lush and deeply felt experience, one that changes us,” said the *Boston Globe*. “An experience every bit as real as today’s date, but harder to quantify.”

*Tania Bruguera RI ’17* was one of six finalists for the Hugo Boss Prize 2016, a biennial award administered by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, which brings with it a solo exhibition. She is included in a catalog published in conjunction with the award, which features portfolios contributed by each of the finalists along with essays that discuss their practice. The artist was also featured in a segment of PRI’s *The World*. In the episode, which aired shortly after Fidel Castro’s death, the artist considered the post-dictator future of her homeland, Cuba.


For the *Artforum* series 500 Words, *Wendy Jacob RI ’05* spoke with Claire Barliant about her exhibition at the Radcliffe Institute’s Johnson-Kulukundis Family Gallery. *Calm. Smoke rises vertically,* which explored sensory experience using vibrating walls, a live-streaming weather report, and architectural models from schools for the blind, was on view through January 14. Galérie Mourlot, in New York City’s Upper East Side, recently hosted a solo painting exhibition, *Drawing the Line*, by *Judith Seligson ’72*. The online magazine *New York Spaces* ran a lengthy Q and A with the artist in advance of the exhibition.

*Sarah Sze RI ’06* had two site-specific installations premiere at Brandeis University’s Rose Art Museum. *Timekeeper* and *Blue Wall Moulting* were on display through December. “With *Timekeeper* the artist seeks to trigger in viewers something like...”

João Pedro Rodrigues edited *The Ornithologist (O Ornitológo)* while he was the 2014–2015 Radcliffe-Harvard Film Study Center Fellow and Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation Fellow. Before turning to cinema, he studied to become an ornithologist himself.

This past fall, *Kamal Aljafari RI ’10* had screenings at the Biennal de la Imagen en Movimiento, in Argentina; at the Cinémathèque Québécoise, in Canada; and at the Etats généraux du film documentaire de Lussas, in France, which screened three of his films—*The Roof* (2008), *Port of Memory* (2009), on which he worked during his fellowship year, and *Recollection* (2015)—on the closing night of its 2016 festival. Additionally, *Recollection* enjoyed showings in Amman, Beirut, Berlin, and Copenhagen.

*Crackskull Row*, a play by *Honor Molloy RI ’03*, had its world premiere at the WorkShop Theater Company during the first Irish Theatre Festival in New York City. The play was an NYT Critics’ Pick, and a review praised Molloy’s work “exploring rage, dissolution, sexual perversity, and family history with a bleak and penetrating acuity.”

The playwright *Anna Deavere Smith BI ’92* tackled the school-to-prison pipeline in a new project, *Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education*. It debuted at the American Repertory Theater in late summer. Smith based the show, which included a midshow talk-back, on 250 interviews she conducted around the country. In an interview with the *Boston Globe*, Smith said she’s looking to inspire civic engagement with the piece.
Doctor, Scholar, Leader

This past summer, Paula A. Johnson '80, MD '84, MPH '85 became the 14th president of Wellesley College, the first African American to serve in that office. The chair of the search committee says, “Dr. Johnson stood out through her record as a scholar and leader, together with her passion for women’s advancement, education, and well-being, the energy and insights she conveyed in our discussions, and her enthusiasm for Wellesley.”

Prior to her appointment, Johnson was a professor and faculty member at Harvard Medical School and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and served as chief of the Division of Women’s Health at Harvard Medical School and Boston’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital, where she founded and directed the Connors Center for Women’s Health and Gender Biology.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum acquired an artwork by Janet Echelman '87 for its permanent collection: 1.8 Renwick, which the Smithsonian commissioned for the grand reopening of the Renwick Gallery. Echelman’s net sculpture will be on view in the Renwick’s Grand Salon, where it premiered in 2015’s Wonder exhibition. In the past few months, Echelman also installed aerial sculptures in Greensboro, North Carolina, and in Montreal.

Through February 26, the Lebanese artist Lamia Joreige RI '17 is taking part in Artes Mundi 7, an exhibition that brings together a shortlist of six international artists who explore and engage with social issues. A winner was due to be chosen about a month before the end of the exhibition, which is on view at National Museum Cardiff, in the United Kingdom.

Public Life

In January, Justin Trudeau, Canada’s prime minister, named Chrystia Freeland '90 as minister of foreign affairs. Freeland, called “a leading Russia critic” by the Guardian, is a writer, journalist, and politician who most recently served as Canada’s minister of international trade.

The American Philosophical Society, the nation’s oldest learned society, has elected Linda Greenhouse ’68 as its next president. Greenhouse has been an elected member of the APS since 2001 and its vice president since 2012. She was elected unanimously and will be the first woman to serve in that post. Greenhouse is the Knight Distinguished Journalist in Residence and Joseph Goldstein Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School and writes a biweekly column for the New York Times, where she covered the Supreme Court for 30 years.

Ann Eldridge ’57, MAT ’59 and Juanita C. Hernández ’82, JD ’85 earned Harvard Alumni Association Awards for their volunteer service to the University. Eldridge is currently a volunteer for The Radcliffe Campaign, and Hernández is a founding member and chair of the Harvard Law School Association’s Latino Alumni Committee.

Janet Echelman’s net sculpture—made from 11 miles of multicolored twine and illuminated by a programmed LED display—hangs in the Renwick Gallery’s 100-foot-long Grand Salon over a 4,000-square-foot monochromatic textile floor repurposed from nylon fishing nets.
Guided by Exuberance
Stephanie LeMenager—a 2016–2017 Radcliffe Institute fellow and the Barbara and Carlisle Moore Distinguished Professor of English and American Literature and a professor of environmental studies at the University of Oregon—ponders what it means to be human in the era of climate change and how the humanities can help us behave in a more ecologically connected manner. She is an early adopter in a new area of research, the environmental humanities, and is using climate change as a touchstone for exploring her Radcliffe project, “Weathering: Toward a Sustainable Humanities.”

Who are your heroes?
I have many. To name three: Rachel Carson, Octavia Butler, Henry David Thoreau. All writer-scholars. All passionate critics and (essentially) utopianists.

Which trait do you most admire in yourself?
I’m fundamentally joyous. I tenaciously love the world.

Who is your muse?
Dogs, Birds. The smell of trees after rain.

Tell us your favorite memory.
Horseback riding through a derelict pasture behind a barn in Northbrook, Illinois. The horse was named Jello, because he “shook”—bucked. I rode double bareback with my friend Sonia. We were five. That field is now a strip mall.

Describe yourself in six words or fewer.
Exuberance and rumination are my poles.

What is your most treasured possession?
1. Any writing implement. 2. Anything that carries me out of myself and out of doors (e.g., shoes, kayak, horse).

What inspires you?
Everything not me. I’m keen on the world and eager to feel it—as a walker, reader, museum gaper.

Name a pet peeve.
Careerism. In the era of climate change, I could also say that mortality is a pet peeve, to the extent that it encourages thinking within the human life span, a fatal blindness.

Were your life to become a motion picture, who would portray you?
A bird. I’d be the curious creature hopping at the edge of the frame.

What is your fantasy career?
Field biologist.

What is your greatest triumph so far?

What do you mean by “sustainable humanities”?
A sustainable humanities acts in the world by making clear that no present tense, let alone future, is inevitable and by offering empathy and robust sociality as profound sources of pleasure.

You’re a scholar of literature and a proponent of “cli-fi,” or climate fiction. What does this latest literary genre offer to our times?
Cli-fi offers both realism and fantasy with the science of climate change as their empirical horizon. It practices umpteen scenarios of living with climate change. Even its dystopian imaginings allow us a relatively safe—because fictional—means of thinking into this unprecedented future.

Can you give an example of a cli-fi book that our readers might enjoy?
Barbara Kingsolver’s Flight Behavior (Harper, 2012) offers a conciliatory and hopeful response to climate change—one that might feel increasingly precious as we move into the Trump presidency.

What inspired you to join a new interdisciplinary area of research, the environmental humanities, and to found its first journal?
Climate change was my primary inspiration to do these things. I believe that we need the humanities more than ever, by which I mean we need to remember and to practice the aspiration of being human—the best that “the human” has meant and can be.
Bound by History

In March 2016, Harvard President Drew Gilpin Faust, in an opinion piece in the Harvard Crimson, urged the University to more fully acknowledge and understand its links to slavery. "The past never dies or disappears," she said. "It continues to shape us in ways we should not try to erase or ignore."

On March 3, 2017, the Radcliffe Institute will host a daylong conference to explore the relationship between slavery and universities—across the country and around the world.

The conference builds on Harvard and Slavery: Seeking a Forgotten History, an initiative launched in 2007 in which students and faculty members began a detailed examination of Harvard’s range of connections to slavery.

► Find out more about this event and its live webcast on our website.
On Radcliffe Day, Friday, May 26, 2017, we will honor the excellence, integrity, and impact of Gwen Ifill and Judy Woodruff.

Please join us to recognize two Radcliffe medalists, one historic partnership, and the immeasurable importance of great journalism.

The day will feature remembrances of Gwen Ifill, a conversation between Judy Woodruff and Walter Isaacson, commentary from David Brooks, and a panel discussion, “(Un)Truths and Their Consequences,” with Danielle Allen, A’Lelia Bundles, E.J. Dionne, Ann Marie Lipinski, and Peggy Noonan.

Learn more about Radcliffe Day, including information about the panels and registration: www.radcliffe.harvard.edu.