

DEEP SPRINGS COLLEGE

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

FALL 2017



Photo by Martin Dolsky DS15

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President's Letter

by David Neidorf

Outside Deep Springs Valley, the news that the college will admit women in July of 2018 is the news everyone asks about. And it's true; legal obstacles overcome, our new admissions policy follows the language ordered by the Superior Court. Rather than confining our admissions to "promising young men," we now accept applications from "promising young people."

The six years since the Trustees voted to pursue coeducation sometimes feels like a long time. When it does, I remind myself that it's not really so long a time to untangle a knot a century in the making, a knot tangled all the more by the last forty years of discussion about coeducation that sometimes shaded into a dispute that hardened views, and sometimes couldn't help but distract from the all-important experience of the students living and working at Deep Springs at any given time.

Each July new first-year students arrive to take up residence and membership at Deep Springs. They know a great deal is about to be asked of them, but they can't yet be sure what it is or how they will rise to the challenge. Their faces are tense with anticipation, worry, determination, awkwardness, impatience, and sometimes a slowly dawning delight. They have tried to imagine what will happen next, yet most of their expectations will quickly be proved wrong. They know Deep Springs is for them an experiment and an adventure that will change them in ways they cannot foresee. It's always moving to see this openness, both delicate and courageous, towards what the next two years will bring. It's easy to imagine L.L. Nunn being moved in a similar way. Without the yearly embrace of new challenges and unforeseen growth by each new student body, Deep Springs wouldn't be worth much.

There is a difference, however, between the entering students and the college itself. After a century of experience, how a Deep Springs education works is not mysterious. In welcoming people who don't yet know what they are getting into, we know at this point what we are doing. Each year is "experimental," but it's the people—the students, the staff, the donors, and the trustees—that are being tried. It would be easy to let the program coast.

But a century into its life, the college would enter a creaking old age if its extended community were to stop demanding of ourselves what we rightly require of the young. The college won't survive if first-years resist or resent the need to adapt hard-won virtues to changing conditions; the same goes for the entire community. Our entering students have turned towards the liminal beauty of those moments of challenge and possibility you see reflected in their faces on arrival; those who hold the life of the college in their hands would have failed those students by doing less.

As someone who loves Deep Springs and what it can mean to its students, I am grateful to the so many supporters who have remained steadfast during what, taking the long view, has been a paltry few years of legal wrangling. Steadfastly devoted, that is, to the founding educational vision of L.L. Nunn, and to our best judgment about how to implement that vision in its second century. Those of us in the valley are grateful to all of you—Trustees, donors, staff, faculty, and well-wishers generally—who from its abundance did not lose heart. Thank you.



Photo by Jacob Dickinson DS76

Fall Course Offerings

MATHEMATICS AND POLITICAL LIFE – AMITY WILCZEK

This course explores how mathematical reasoning and the language of mathematics have the potential to alter and enhance interaction with politically charged information and discourse. The course focuses on two central areas: first, developing the mathematical and computer programming skills to interpret complex quantitative data, and second, exploring the influence of social choice theory in democratic voting systems.

HISTORY AND FUTURE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE – AMITY WILCZEK

Despite remarkable advances in disease prevention and treatment in the last century, the Global Health Council estimates that 15 million deaths each year are caused by infectious diseases. This course explores how the biology of diseases affects transmission and treatment and how this interplay in turn influences public health decisions. For their final projects, students will investigate an invented or existing infectious disease not covered in the course, describing the disease's method of action, mode of transmission, and factors of risk.

PLATO: THE REPUBLIC – DAVID MCNEILL

This course is devoted to a close reading of Plato's Republic as an introduction to fundamental questions of philosophy. Students are following the text in its explorations of the scope of human knowledge, the aspiration toward a perfectly just society, the relation between the individual good and the common good, the relation between individual psychology and social psychology, and the fundamental nature of reality.

DOSTOEVSKY – DAVID MCNEILL

This class is devoted to reading *The Double*, *Notes from Underground*, *The Possessed* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. Dostoevsky's novels have profoundly impacted both religious and secular traditions of thought. Students seek to understand better the reasons behind Dostoevsky's broad influence, paying particular attention to the way in which his various characters each embody autonomous perspectives, seemingly independent of the author's overriding intentions.

READING AND WRITING THE MODERN ESSAY – DAVID GORIN

This course is an introduction to the art of the non-fiction essay, taught by our new visiting professor from Yale University, David Gorin. Students are learning how to craft compelling essays through close reading a wide variety of essays by authors including George Orwell, Joan Didion, David Foster Wallace, Anne Fadiman, Leslie Jamison, and John D'Agata, who was a visiting student at Deep Springs for a semester in '95. Students are writing and rewriting four essays, each in a different subgenre: personal essay, place essay, cultural criticism, and argument.

MARX, WEBER, DURKHEIM – JENNY SMITH

This course is closely studying the works of three foundational thinkers in the social sciences: Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Émile Durkheim. Students are examining the rise of industrial capitalism, the growth of bureaucracy, the confrontation between science and religion, and the transformed role of the individual vis-à-vis new structures of communal life. Additionally, students are studying how these thinkers set out to understand such forces using scientific techniques, founding sociology as we know it today.

DEVELOPMENT - JENNY SMITH

What are the historical causes of some nations' wealth and others' poverty? What are the current factors keeping nations in poverty? How can the world escape underdevelopment? And is the notion of 'development' a coherent concept in the first place? Guided by these questions, students are embarking on a study of the history, politics and economics of development, using texts by both Western and non-Western authors.

INTRODUCTION TO DRAWING – JUSTIN KIM

Justin Kim, who last fall taught the immensely popular "Modernism through Modern Art", has returned to the valley to teach drawing in a studio art course. In the course of finding their artistic sensibility, students are developing skills of perception, approaches to formal issues in drawing (line, shape, volume, tone, value, and composition), and skills of critique. Students are also studying other work and frequently present their own. The class will be traveling to LA to visit a couple of galleries in term 3.

DS17 Student Bios

- by Will Borchard & Townes Nelson DS17

Hailing from Berkeley, CA, **ELLIOTT JONES** wears a single, ambiguous, and farm-stained t-shirt every day - without fail. Elliott embodies the Deep Springs spirit through strict isolation, intense farm labor, and a refusal to shower. He's often found contemplating the "thick" texts for class, fixing "boned" (a.k.a. broken or extremely bent) irrigation pipes on Betty (a.k.a. the irrigation line south of 1 and 2), or employing his northern Californian vernacular to persuade unsuspecting members of the SB.

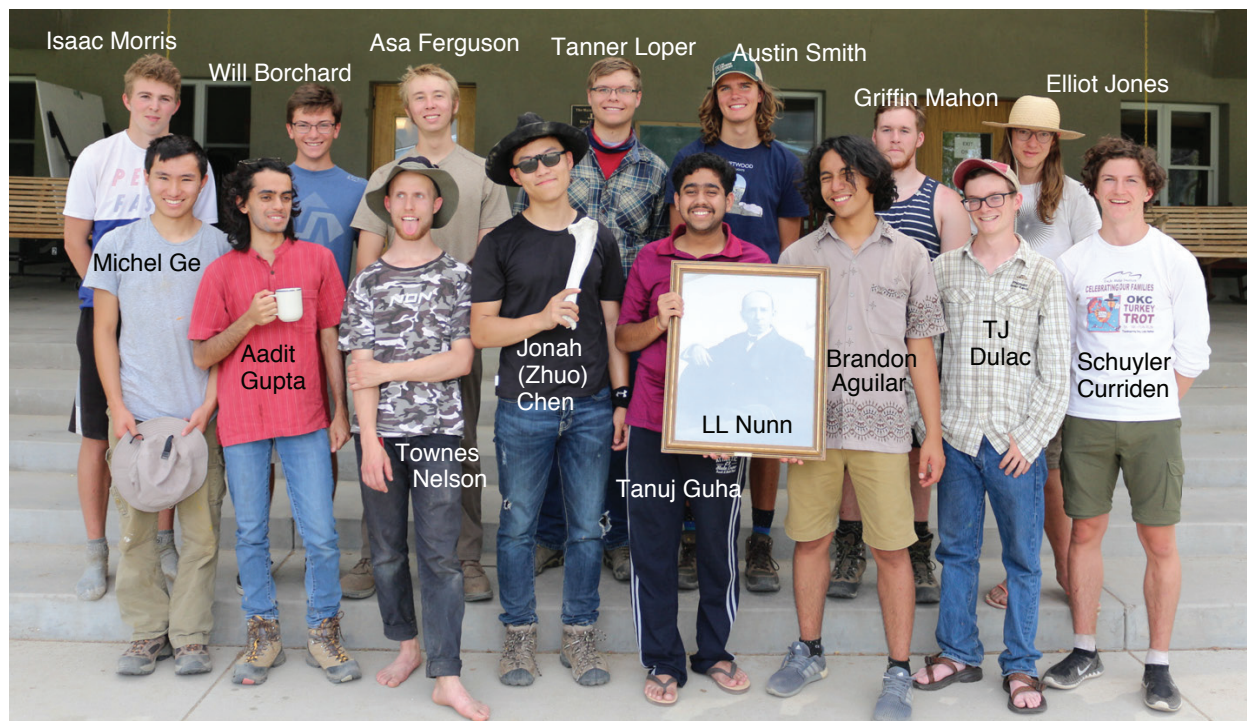
From the beautiful city of Los Angeles, **ASA FERGUSON** is the man of style and taste in DS'17. Whether sporting the most eclectic of the bonepile's habiliments, mesmerizing class with his passionate elocution, or walking around the garden with a gopher-slaying look in his eyes, Asa distinguishes himself as an independent and visionary Deep Springer.

GRIFFIN MAHON, commonly (or uncommonly) referred to as G-Money or Griff, has transferred to Deep Springs from the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. He treats his withdrawals from the salty spray of the Ocean with almost daily late night swims in the upper res, inviting anyone who's up for it. Griffin is known in the wider world as a moderator for the website Rap Genius, and often breaks down the complexity of Mos Def or the latest of SoundCloud rap on the SmoPo.

The kind spirit of Deep Springs, **TANUJ GUHA** loves his classmates almost as much as he loves ice cream. From Jamshedpur, India, Tanuj's joie de vivre is contagious. Besides smiling and greeting everyone he sees, or trying futilely to continue whatever activity the SB picked for edutainment after it has ended, Tanuj uses his free time to work tirelessly on his thrilling short stories for our creative writing workshops or community DSPACs.

The nephew in the ancestral line of UWC Pearson students, **AADIT GUPTA** arrived in the valley from UWC-SEA after a brief stint at Yale-NUS (Singapore). Aadit feeds his progressive (read liberal) capitalist tendencies by devouring such magazines as The Economist, or laboring for empathy with rustbelt America as our Mechanic's Assistant. Aadit often challenges the authority of Western Canon writers with the hopes of diversifying the Deep Springs' curriculum.

Coming from his beloved city of Providence, **BRANDON AGUILAR** loves all things sincere. Brandon is recognizable through his "What's good?" and generous dap greetings. In the classroom, at the dinner table, or in the Rumpus Room, Brandon can be quickly identified for his ever-contemplative face hidden within the locks of a true philosopher's hair.



From Minneapolis, **TOWNES NELSON** can be found wearing the bonepile US army jumpsuit while critiquing American imperialism or staring longingly at the casual pre-dinner soccer games, waiting for the day we might play ultimate frisbee. Through his focused stare, tasteful beard, and general countenance we have no idea how old Townes is, and he has said, “That’s just the way I like it.”

Launched from a “conservative Catholic” background, **TJ DULAC** arrives in the valley to seek out new and productive challenges. TJ isn’t phased by broad and provocative statements - he casually self identifies as the true embodiment of Foucault’s History of Sexuality Volume 1, and states that taking his glasses off, despite its trivial effect on his vision, provides for an equally valid view of the world.

Everyone in the valley looks up to **AUSTIN SMITH** (6’6”) for his warm, southern smile and his pensive yet acute analysis in class. From Salem, North Carolina, Austin brings a passion for music and curiosity for debate, especially when engaged with anyone’s “moral framework.” With an unmistakable laugh and look of incredulity, Austin remains a pacifist even if his animal loving sentiments see you hurting a fly.

Virginia born and raised, **TANNER LOPER** satiates his curiosity through the hidden machines and elusive wisdom of Deep Springs College. While Deep Springs is a bit different from the STEM-focused high school he had attended, Tanner takes the college in stride. Whether he is fixing Betty’s mushroom plugs, curating the DS typewriter collection, or “Revolutionizing the institution of the Deep Springs Bakery,” Tanner is always engaged in some Nunnian ideal.

SCHUYLER CURRIDEN is either reading or in the kitchen. Usually the latter. From Arkansas, Schuyler’s artistic sense in the kitchen has lead to some delectable meals, but his culinary devotion will never touch the time he invests in his intellectual and athletic crafts. When not napping on a main room couch, Schuyler is often seen fencing small children, a foil in one hand, Foucault in the other.

MICHEL GE: art theorist, minimalist short-story writer, poet of the under-ground, BH pre-plates labor martyr; these are just a few of the many descriptions attributed to this Nunnian man. From St. Louis, Missouri, Michel is the Holden Caulfield of the SB, although he can’t understand why. Michel can be found demolishing his competition in chess, getting lost reading in the desert, or dancing at each and every Boogie.

The next generation of Brooklynites at Deep Springs, **ISAAC MORRIS** aspires to be a “true” Marxist, although most of the SB sees his love of Wallace Stevens and prior history in Brooklyn as sure signs of a run-of-the-mill liberal American... Can he ever escape his capitalistic past and bourgeois subconscious? Stay tuned for the next Alumni Newsletter to find out.

ZHUO CHEN is a whistler. Originally from Northeastern China, Zhuo joins our valley community after two years at Wesleyan University. Zhuo is occasionally spotted lying around criticizing the political theories Marx or Arendt, but more often is seen walking to and from the Dairy Barn, perfectly whistling everything from Taylor Swift to Bizet’s *Carmen*.



Interview with Tim Gipson

- by Michael Leger DS16

What were you doing before you came to Deep Springs?

I spent a year and a half in Haiti working for Samaritan's Purse International Relief. It was different. I started out as an equipment operator – we were building a road up in the mountains so this guy could build a church and a school in a village. There were people who had subsistence farms scattered all over the mountains. That's how I started. We finished that road, and then I went to Port au Prince. We cleaned up earthquake-damaged homes and built a pier out of earthquake-damaged homes. Then I became the base manager. Before that, I was on a feed lot in Colorado. But I was living in New Mexico. Kind of like now, I've got a house in Arizona, but working and living here in California... I would've stayed longer, but at some point you've always got to go home.

How did you pick up the skills to be a base manager in Haiti and to work the machinery?

Working on ranches is where I picked up so many different skills. I learned to operate heavy equipment. I learned to fix things. Pouring concrete, plumbing, carpentry – I've learned all that working on a ranch. I expanded my carpenter skills while we were working cows and I've built my own house and barns.

When people ask you where you're from, do you say Ohio or the West?

It depends where I was. In Wyoming I said Texas. For a while I said Colorado. But I got over that. I was born in Ohio and raised there until I got out of high school. I went to college for a year and met a guy from Montana. That was my opening to the West. There were horses in my neighbourhood growing up. Moving out West and working on a ranch seemed like something I really had to do. I had no idea how long I'd do it, but here I am.



What did you think of Deep Springs a year ago when you arrived?

It's different. It's a pretty unique place. But it actually reminded me of the situation I was in, in Haiti. We were isolated in a community. And we're isolated. We're a community. We eat all of our meals together. We spend a lot of time together. As far as the ranch part of it... it's not a huge ranch compared to some I've worked on. But in some ways it operates like a big ranch because it's got divisions. It's got the farm division, the cattle and horse division, the feed division. It's a large operation on a small scale.

What's your favourite part?

That's the hardest question. I love working with horses and cattle. But my favourite parts are the mornings when we eat breakfast and I get to talk to different people. You know, I enjoy riding down to the lake with two or three guys in the truck. I enjoy talking to the guys and listening to their stories, and giving them a side of things that they haven't heard before. I really enjoy that part. It's fun.

And what's the hardest part, or most unique part?

That's an even harder question. Some things that seemed difficult early on I've learned to deal with. Honestly some of the infrastructure is severely neglected and that really bothered me when I first got here for the first 6-8 months. Fences, water systems, gates. People had made a temporary solution to permanent problems. That got to be my saying this summer. There's a lot of that in this place, I'm afraid. And I've tried to fix some of it, but some of it I'll probably never get to.



*Photos on
this spread
by Townes
Nelson
DS17*

If you could change one thing about this place, if you could leave your mark on Deep Springs, what would it be?

I would change some of the attitudes towards stewardship of the entire place. There are times I look and I think that people don't have enough respect for it – the institution. When I first started working with Jack I said “Jack, don't do it that way. Do it in an organized way.” And he'd say “Oh it's the Deep Springs way.” And I'd say, ‘Well that's not my way. We're going to do things right or we're not going to do things at all.’ I get the same feeling sometimes when I walk through the BH and things are strewn everywhere. I wish people had more discipline... but that starts at the top. Like the other day when I asked you to not throw the hay bail over the side of the truck. I like to take a little better care of things. Because, you know, somebody somewhere has donated their hard work and money to these things. Let's pay them respect by trying to take care of what they've given us.

How did the cowboys do?

The guys on the mountains did an excellent job. They worked really, really hard. They took ownership of what needed to be done. Aaron knew what needed done as far as the pasture moving and keeping the cows off the riparian areas. They took good care of the horses. They couldn't have done any better. I was very pleased. I didn't know the country up there, but Aaron had been there the year before. I was fortunate for him to come back and be so responsible. I can't say enough good things about those guys.

If you gave a speech at public speaking, what would you say?

Because of the mission statement of the college I would talk about service. Service starts the minute you walk across that cattle guard. Starts with the stewardship I was talking about before. The fact that you don't have to go to Haiti to be of service to humanity. You start with the person next to you. If he needs something, take care of his needs. In the BH, you be the best guy that ever walked in the BH. If your job is the orderly, you be the best orderly they've ever had. Take your job seriously. That's your service to your community. That's how you serve your community by doing the best job that you can.

Is there anything you want to say about co-ed next year?

It's going to be different. It'll come together as it comes together. I think it won't take long before everyone says “this is the way things are”.

Survey: What is the Fourth Pillar?

- *The Voice of the Desert*
- Emotional Labor
- Sleep
- CORINTHIAN

Interview with Laura Marcus

- by Michael Leger DS16

What is your role on the transition committee?

I came to be on the transition committee in part because I worked at Deep Springs in 2012, when the college was planning on going co-ed the following year. Basically, my first assignment when I arrived in the valley was to recruit the first class of women to Deep Springs. We received an amazing batch of applications from women that fall, none of which – alas – we could ultimately accept. As a consequence, I founded the Arete Project almost immediately thereafter – bringing the project together with John Moriarty DS'05 and running our first program in summer 2014. Getting to participate in a novel incarnation of a Nunnian education with only female students has given me, I think, a kind of special insight into some of the questions and challenges Deep Springs is facing right now. I hope some of that insight will be useful to the transition process. And, having done a year of recruitment at DS and four (going on five!) for Arete, I'm pretty confident we'll get an outstanding group of women in the DS class of 2018.

What does the actual recruitment work look like? Who are you looking for?

It's a little bit challenging to find students who are going to be excellent Deep Springers. I think they are hiding everywhere, in all sorts of schools. Even if there were a few feeder schools we could rely on for consistently good applicants, I don't know if that would be an ideal thing for the college. What I've been trying to do this time around is to make sure that we're casting a really wide net. I certainly have been tapping into connections that, in the past, have given us great Deep Springers, but I think it would be a mistake if that was our only approach.

Photos on this spread provided by the Arete Project



A lot of the work I'm doing now is making sure I'm reaching out to the normal run-of-the-mill public school that the vast majority of high school students are attending. This is hard because, obviously, that's a lot of schools within a system that is highly decentralized. One strategy has been tapping into national associations of college counsellors, which is an effective way to reach out to a lot of people at once. I've gotten some really positive responses both from counsellors who were already familiar with Deep Springs and those who weren't. I'm optimistic about that.

In my more targeted work, I'm reaching out to high schools that serve high-achieving students who come from lower income brackets, students who would not normally be in the Ivy League pipeline, and students of color. I've been reaching out to both public and private schools in the International Baccalaureate network. I've been reaching out to all-girls' schools. I've been trying to find networks of schools that are maybe just a little bit off the beaten path or that give us access to a really broad swath of students.

So that's one whole part of my time. The rest – actually, the majority – is answering individual emails and phone calls from women who are applying this year. My job there is to serve as a personal face for an institution which – let's face it – can indulge a little bit in its aura of mystery. And student questions range all over the place – from the application itself, to course offerings, concerns about the transition, details of the labor program.

Could you say anything about that? Have you been receiving common questions and concerns?

An understandably common question is “how will Deep Springs change when it goes co-ed? What can I expect as a

member of the first co-ed class in an institution that has served only male students for 100 years?” And the reality is that this is very hard to predict. Cohorts at Deep Springs are so small that they're incredibly influenced by personalities of individuals. A lot of differences – and there will be differences – will come from the simple fact that we'll have 50 percent turnover

in the SB, as we do every year. So I tell applicants that, if they're accepted, they will be the co-authors of the transition and of their own Deep Springs experience. What the first year of coeducation looks like will, in large part, depend on them.

But I do think there is some valid concern among applicants that the all-male-college-on-an-isolated-cattle-ranch thing has cultivated, perhaps, a certain culture of machismo. A lot of what I've been trying to do is put those concerns to rest, but also to put them in context. I expect – and I tell applicants this – that they may have to engage in some challenging conversations about gender politics in the first couple of years. But at least from my time at Deep Springs and my impression of the Deep Springs community now, I think those conversations will be incredibly generous and fruitful. I mean, let's face it – our whole society needs to have some challenging conversations about gender politics. But Deep Springs is unique in that it can foster the kind of intimacy and trust between its students that, I think, can actually allow those conversations to happen successfully.

Maybe you just answered it, but I wonder- thinking about the transition happening, if you were a fly on the wall, what would you be interested to see?

All that stuff I just said about women co-authoring the first chapter of Deep Springs as a coed school? That's what I want to see. I want to see how they make that story – and Deep Springs' story – their own.

You're completing your PhD now in education, could you talk a little bit about that? What's your dissertation on?

I'm wrapping up my coursework at Stanford right now and moving to Alaska in December, which is where I'll write my dissertation. My general topic is the history of education in the American west from 1880-1920. Specifically, I'm looking at the ways that the closing of the frontier, in ways both real and imagined, gave rise to problems in American democratic society that schools were deployed to solve. One of my chapters, of course, is on Deep Springs. I could yak about this for literally hours, but I'm trying to practice the thirty-words-or-less version of my dissertation description. Clearly I've still got a ways to go.

How did you become interested in education more broadly?

I have always loved learning, and I have always been good at school. But it took me a while to realize that those were, in fact, separable things. Though I had wonderful experiences in both high school and col-

lege, at a certain point I began to feel pretty cynical about the whole endeavour – that it was all about getting good grades and perfecting my transcript, and that there were no stakes to my education for anyone beyond myself. That made me start thinking about the relationship between schooling and learning, about the social and civic missions of education, about how my own education would, I hoped, change me.

One of the things that really excited me about Deep Springs, when I first encountered it, was that I'd finally found an educational model where your education – and the work you put into it – actually matters to someone apart from yourself. In the process of learning and from the fruit of that learning you are able to contribute something to the people around you. That remains the central reason why Nunnian education is so inspiring to me. So much of modern educational culture is wrapped up in a vision of personal achievement that, to me, undercuts the civic mission to which so many educational institutions are constantly paying lip service. I think the Nunnian model provides a vision of what education could look like if it truly were about producing good citizens and shaping good leaders and preparing people for service. People who take responsibility not only for themselves but for the world around them.

How's the Arete project going? What's new?

This is a watershed moment for the Arete Project. Next summer will, somehow, be our fifth summer of operations, meaning that we're gearing up for a five-year anniversary celebration in early 2019. We've found a wonderful, stable home for our summer programs at Arthur Morgan School in North Carolina. We're forming a board of directors and incorporating early next year. We're running a really robust student self-governance program during the academic year, with Blue Ridge Session alums serving on four differ-



Interview continued...

ent standing committees and populating an alum advisory board. We're laying the groundwork for more programs in different locations. We're even beginning to contemplate purchasing a campus!

In the midst of all that, I'm moving permanently to Gustavus, Alaska in December. This is a town of about 400 people, 60 miles west of Juneau, bordering the Inside Passage on one side and Glacier Bay National Park on all three others. It's only accessible by bush plane or ferry. So basically, it's a town with its own isolation policy.

I'm convinced that Gustavus is going to be a remarkable place to run Nunnian education programs, and I'm excited to bring our first group of Arete Project students up there, hopefully in summer 2018. We'll continue operating the Blue Ridge Session under the leadership of our remarkable new Program Director, Kavita Hardy. And I'll get to focus my energies on writing our next chapter in Alaska.

Those energies will be substantial since, for the first time, the Arete Project will be my full-time job, not just my side hustle. Not only will that give me the opportunity to build Arete in a way I've been dreaming about for years, but it will also give us the

chance to expand our programs and embark on some new experiments. For instance, the Blue Ridge Session will remain all women, since that experience has consistently been for our students a valuable counterpoint to normal coed school environments. But personally, I am looking forward to creating coed programs for the Arete Project in Alaska. With any luck, that will happen next summer – and Deep Springs and Arete will go coed at the same time! Then, you know, we can get together and swap notes.

Photo provided by the Arete project



Valley Insider

Wedding Bells at Henderson!

With jeans and work boots still soiled with chicken droppings, Noah Beyeler DS03, our resident small animals whisperer, carpenter and alfalfa farmer extraordinaire, was married to Gwen Von Klan Beyeler this fall. They had a beautiful wedding in the highlands of the valley, catered by three current students.



Missing Michele & Andrew

Michele Lanan, our Herbert Reich Chair of the Natural Sciences, and her husband Andrew Wasser, our internet wizard (or "Eru"), departed from Deep Springs this past summer. They are now located at the American Natural Museum of History's Southwestern Research Station in Arizona, where Michele serves as Resident Research Scientist. We miss them already!

The Transition Committee and its Subcommittees

Transition Committee

The Transition Committee is a group of Deep Springs alumni, trustees, outside consultants, staffulty members, and students devoted to overseeing the college's transition to coed. A similar committee was created in 2011 amidst the initial planning for coed, and we are lucky enough to be joined by some of those who served on that committee. So far, the transition committee has met once, in late August, in which it decided to recommend to the Board of Trustees to begin accepting applicants of all genders in the class of 2018. In that meeting, the Transition Committee also designated five subcommittees and came up with a list of tasks for each. Those subcommittees, described below, have begun to meet throughout the past month and a half, and are each comprised of students and staffulty, alongside a few Transition Committee members from outside the valley.

Sexual Assault and Harassment Subcommittee

The Sexual Assault and Harassment Subcommittee has been assembled to revisit and solidify Deep Springs' procedure on assault and harssement within the community. We see responding to -and ultimately ending- things like harassment and, in the extreme, assault, as a communal, institutional, and ethical responsibility. Our approach is to use research on the policies of other schools as well as considerations of the conditions that make Deep Springs an exceptional environment, to decide upon the best institutional procedure for responding to problems or accusations in our very particular community. This research will cumulate in a summit at DS over terms 3-4 break in which the committee will work with college-aged women and other qualified individuals to draft the formal policy that the college will use during the transition period.

Student Life Subcommittee

The Student Life subcommittee has been tasked with physical alterations to the dorm allowing for privacy in bathrooms and showers, revising the guest policy and expectations, and revisiting dorm room assignments. Additionally, Student Life will be examining aspects of the Deep Springs experience in anticipation of coeducation, including the welcomeness of the community, tone in student body meetings, and masculine stereotypes associated with labor positions. We will also be reviewing the consent policy. The subcommittee will host two community-wide discussions, one in Term 3 and one in the spring semester.

Orientation Subcommittee

The Orientation subcommittee will synthesize the work of the other subcommittees into an actionable program that can be implemented in Term 1 of 2018. While the exact details of the orientation are not yet planned, this committee is in part looking at the transition as an opportunity to improve the current orientation process as well as meeting the needs of coeducation.

Health and Safety Subcommittee

The Health and Safety Subcommittee will examine what is needed to ensure the health of students on a co-ed campus. Our first task is to identify potential issues and to determine timeframes in which to address them. Issues we have identified so far include establishing contact with women's health care providers in Bishop, formulating a plan to integrate female students into our student nurse program for next year, and ensuring students' access to confidential prescription ordering and pickup.

Legal Liability Subcommittee

In anticipation of the upcoming changes to the Deep Springs operation, the Legal Liability Subcommittee has been charged with assessing the legality of policies developed by the other subcommittees. To allow other subcommittees to think freely towards developing proposals, our work is constrained to evaluating finalized policies. We hope to hold our first meeting in Term 3 once proposed policies and ideas have been put forward.

Farm Report

- by Noah Beyeler

This summer farm team managed to clean, organize, and restock the irrigation shed, organize and get inventory in the stackyards, restore our fertilizer injection system to working order, and attend to the usual minor repairs and updates around the alfalfa fields and irrigation lines. Further, we are currently working with Padraic to install a new transformer at the deep well pump which will increase the efficiency of our electricity use.

We baled a total of 378 tons of hay this year, and have around 100 tons of that available to sell. On the organic front, our hay will be certified organic starting in April of 2018, which means all of the hay we grow next year we will be able to sell as organic.

Small Animal Report

- by Noah Beyeler

This past year was steady in terms of egg production, as we averaged 76 eggs a day (down slightly from 79 a day over fiscal year 2015-2016). However, this year we also started selling extra eggs to a local bakery in town to help deal with the summer surplus. We sold 183 dozen eggs through September, leaving us with an average of just over 70 eggs a day for BH use.

This is the third full summer of the college raising broilers. We ran 6 batches of broilers, and ended up with 3,665 lbs of whole birds, around 1,000 lbs more than last year. As we ran out of chicken early into winter last year, we aimed to produce more this summer with the hopes that we can make it into spring with the chicken we have on hand. For our fourth batch of broilers this season, we switched to a different breed of broilers called Freedom Rangers. And we should have plenty of turkey for Thanksgiving this year.

I do expect that within a year or two we will be looking to buy a bred dairy cow to replace at least one of our current cows. The students have brought back the creamer position this term, so hopefully some of that excess milk can be utilized better (perhaps in the form of ice cream).

autumn evening
the scarecrow's shadow
no—my own
Michel Ge DS'17

Ranch Report

- by Tim Gipson

After the hard winter of early 2017, springtime came and Deep Springs Valley was flush with new growth on the desert shrubs and a plethora of forbs carpeted the landscape. This was welcomed by the Deep Springs cows as they strove to recover from their previous poor body conditions caused by snow and low temperatures. Additional high value mineral was made available to them to help them in their recovery and give them extra nutrients that would allow them to conceive in a timely manner.

On July 15th we moved 138 pairs onto the forest allotment. Due to the hard work of the mountain cowboys and good winter moisture, the allotment was in very good condition when the cows were removed on September 9th and 10th. A few days later on September 13th we moved the cattle from the South Oasis Pasture into the valley to join the rest of the cattle for winter.

Preg-check went smoothly and when we finished we had an 85% conception rate. We also weaned the calves at this time and final count on weaned calves was 155.

This fall we have agreed to send 15 steer calves and 2 yearling steers to DS alum Gareth Fisher in the Bay area to graze over the winter. This is part of our plan to eventually market cattle at heavier weights and give us an alternate market for our cattle when we become certified organic next year.

An eight year old gelding quarter horse was purchased in June. In July, after our flatbed Ford pickup gave up the ghost, we purchased a 2009 F250 Super Duty, Crew Cab, diesel pickup.

Photo by Townes Nelson DS17



Garden Report

- by Shelby MacLeish

Summer came to a grinding halt this year with an earlier than usual frost on September 21st. Before that we had a productive and fun summer in the garden space. Both the term six and term one garden crews worked hard to bring in as much produce as possible to the BH while trying not to over-produce either. We left many sections of the garden fallow this summer opting instead to plant cover crops to work on soil health. Some of the big winners this year were the cantaloupes, melons, winter squash and tomatoes. We still have several rows of tomatoes and basil going strong in the large hoop refusing to say goodbye to summer (until October 6).

During the first weeks of October we worked to plant our garlic, shallots and onion sets. This fall much of our garlic is "Deep Springs Garlic," due to the mixing of all our seed garlic over the summer. In addition to using the garlic on campus, we save it for seed in the coming years and trade it for other products in the valley. In addition to garlic seed we have also started saving potato, melon, pepper and squash along with some herb and flower seed.

This fall we began to integrate more permaculture into the overall design of the garden. While the idea is not to redo the whole garden (again) the gardeners and I are looking towards the underused and wasted spaces in the garden and orchard. The first addition was more raspberries along the garden fence line. These berries will help with wind block over time and provide habitat for beneficial animals like birds, snakes and insects. This fall we will also begin experimenting with Hügelkultur composting. Hügelkultur is a German word that means mound or hill culture and it tries to replicate the decomposition that occurs on forest floors. We would build raised beds or mounds out of sticks, leaves, logs and other material from around the garden and cover that with a layer of soil. Ideally (and in a wetter environment) the mass would decompose and provide a beautiful growing environment for anything. Of course, we will have to add irrigation to our mounds, but beyond that the experiment should replicate quite well. Another plus is that we will be able to process some of our green waste and sticks instead of putting them in the big waste pile. The plan is to start building our first mound in the orchard this fall.



SB Wishlist:

- Soccer & basketballs
- Sweaters
- Contemporary literature
- Women's clothing
- New squat rack
- Riding boots
- Nice magnets for the dorm fridge

Looking Back at the Reunion

-by John Dewis DS94

All reunion photos provided by Jacob Dickinson DS76

Would the voice of the desert be audible among 500? I lay on my back on the main circle and closed my eyes. The sunset brought wind, the irrigation lines irrigated, a truck turned a corner, a heifer lowed. And the murmur of many voices of many genders of many ages of a thousand hellos and hurrahs. The voice of the desert was audible indeed- and it was us!

Someone - Karl Jaspers?- said you're either Jesus or Socrates. You find what you seek alone in the wild or in the crowd of the marketplace. Deep Springs places the city in the desert and tells you to be both. Something like Vegas but inverted: the vast and incoherent masquerades as the small and clear. You are asked to sit with your friends and reason through the impossible. You cannot be unchanged by this.

I always thought the voice of the desert was out there somewhere in the rocks whispering to no one in particular. Perhaps it was a lion Soldier Pass. On June 29, 2017, there were more people in Deep Springs Valley than ever in recorded history. More than when the soldiers hid in the pass, and more than when an Inyo County politician counted votes from a phantom community in White Mountain City. What were we all doing back here?

Same thing as ever: cooling off in the reservoir, walking under the stars, talking, thinking. Friday night the cars roll in and my wife says, "Wow, lots of energy, can't tell if it's all good or not." People standing with their hands on their hips, looking. Every square inch of valley is owned collectively like a memory in a muscle. This is where x happened. This is where I failed. This is where I was a great friend. This is where I read that thing that changed everything. This is where something mattered to me for the first time, and I said so.



By Saturday morning the valley was adazzle: Exuberance! Hugs! Laughter! Tents lined the main road all the way to the cattle guard, self-arranged by decade. You know, I thought, we have all chosen one another. This is an odd thing. I love this here. My wife says, "Amazing it turns out all that energy was good." I talked to a man from the class of 1953 as if I'd known him my entire life. I told someone's eight-year-old daughter where to spot the owl. I heard someone say, "This is where I learned to listen." I heard someone say, "This is where I learned to talk to anyone."

Nice to see current students looking a little lost, like what have you done with our place? And who are you, anyway? "Oh, you didn't hear? We're you."

Funny how big worries become the nothings of the past, and the joys land in the hands of the young. There were some pictures, some words, some predictions, some reminiscences, some spectacular dining, some more laughter. Nobody got hurt. And then we were all gone. And the next students arrived to take up the work of the next century.





THANK YOU!

We have discovered that it is impossible to thank everyone by name. The beauty of collective responsibility is that anonymity and unanimity converge on a job well done by all. We have a few particular people whose thanks will stand in for the proper thank you to all. Thanks in advance for those who are willing to stand in for the rest, and apologies in advance to those whose hard work is appreciated but without the publicity.

Staff and Faculty:

David Welle for organizing everything, tirelessly and beautifully
Padraic MacLeish for building the canopy (and so much more)
Noah Beyeler for directing cleanup and fixup in the months prior
Kerrie Coborn for managing the enormous guest list
Niki Frishman for office setup and merchandise
Martha Clark and Thad Stewart - tamales like loaves and fishes

Alumni and friends who helped prepare the grounds and setup the event:

Peter Daniels, Tanner Horst, Harper Keehn, Molly Kiefer, Sibia Maria Inay Ortega, Keenan Lantz, Daniel Leibovitz, Jackson Melnick, Cory Myers, Matt Stoltz, Bryce Snyder, John Stuart, Random Turner-Jones, and the class of DS15.

Most senior alums:

Bob Gatje DS44, David Cole DS45, Curt Karplus DS48, Juraj Slavik, DS48.

Longest distance traveler:

Gene Fang DS90 (Singapore)

Public Speaking: Darwin Berg DS83, Philip Craven DS60, Glen Fukushima DS67, Dan Fulwiler DS85, David Galbraith DS90, Brian Galvin DS65, Curt Karplus DS48, Nathan Leamy DS02, Seth Merrit DS89, Zach Mider DS96, Charlie Munford DS00, Bruce Nestor DS83, Linda & Jack Newell DS56, Vernon Penner DS57, Jay Pulliam DS78, Peter Rosenblum, DS77, Shep Smith DS88, Colin Wambsgans DS96, David Wax DS00 and Suz Slezak.

Panel speakers: Frances Chen, Brad Edmondson DS76, James Gibbs DS89, Tom Hudgens DS88, Jacob Hundt DS98, Jonathan Kriess-Tompkins, Laura Marcus, Brighde Mullins, David Neidorf, Jack Newell DS56, Katie Peterson, Ross Peterson, Iris Pope, Peter Rosenblum DS77, David Schuman, Sharon Schuman, Carla Scheidlinger, Paul Starrs DS75, Michael Stryker DS64, Bryden Sweeny-Taylor DS98, Merrill Vargo, David Welle DS80, Kevin West DS88, Amity Wilczek.

A 'Family Album' For Deep Springs' Centennial

—by David Welle DS80

This past July at the centennial celebration, we released a new commemorative book about Deep Springs, titled **DSC100: Deep Springs College, est. 1917.**



Eighteen months prior, Kevin West DS88, James Gibbs DS89 and Brad Edmondson DS76 joined me on a conference call to begin incubating this book. The project was born out of discussions about ways to celebrate Deep Springs' centennial in a fashion befitting the unique character and experiences the college embodies. The book is meant to be evocative rather than authoritative, non-linear in form but inclusive of one hundred years, built around themes that are key to Deep Springs' identity but focused on the variety of individual experiences therein.

In the first few months, we identified a lot of essential material: oral histories, personal memoirs, archival documents, previous publications, and photos – lots of photos. In addition, we commissioned fresh essays from multiple individuals who provided personal reflections on Deep Springs with some critical distance. Kevin and I took the lead in getting contributors on board. James took the lead on design (and brought in his firm, DBOX, to provide professional design services for the project), and Brad took the lead on identifying archival materials and histories.

We all convened at the college for a deep dive through the archives in August, 2016. Subsequently, James, Kevin and I made three more visits that fall to gather material and shape it into thematic groups, marveling and even arguing over the many distinctive perspectives and consistent threads present in the "Deep Springs Experience."

With Kevin's guidance, we assembled all the written material and archival items into rough drafts, then turned them over to DBOX for layout. From November to March, going back-and-forth with the designers, we developed a dozen drafts of the book, adding here and paring there. Denis Clark DS69 gave assistance with his excellent cache of photos and knowledge of DS history, Brad continued to pull gems from personal interviews with alumni long deceased,

and Hussain Taymuree DS16 filled gaps in the archives.

There were too many people involved to thank in this newsletter space, so I recommend you buy a copy and see for yourself the over 130 contributors to the project. The book is actually six themed folios comprising over 300 pages. It contains some 200 images, as well as a 100-year timeline of events and a first-ever topographic map of Deep Springs Valley (courtesy of James). DSC100 was conceived to be as unique and exceptional as the college it speaks for. You'll find labor fiascoes, governance experiments, desert exploring, self-doubt, intellectual awakening, community joy, disagreements of all kinds, and insights into what makes Deep Springs work.

On behalf of the Centennial Committee, I want to thank all the students, alumni, family, staff and friends who volunteered their time for this project, especially the writers. I'm very grateful to Brad for his far-ranging knowledge and



key work at critical moments. Finally, I'm particularly grateful to Kevin and James for their dedication to this project. They spent massive amounts of their own time and talent, pushing the book to be better and more ambitious, befitting of a centennial. To the extent that DSC100 captures the character of Deep Springs in all its wonderful forms – dark and light – I give them credit for making it so. In the process, they taught me much about artistry and much about our own history.

To see more details (even a video) of the book, visit our website www.deepsprings.edu under "News and Events". **To order a copy of this once-in-a-century publication, contact me directly (1-510-967-6432).**

Biofeedback on the Racetrack with Lee Talbot DS48

-by John Dewis DS94



When a generous check to Deep Springs turned up from Lee Talbot DS48, I grabbed the phone and called him without looking at his class year or age. It was only after he told me about his racing career, and that he routinely beats race-car drivers sixty years his junior, that I did some math.

Lee is 87 years old and directed environmental policy for Nixon and Ford and was an author of the Endangered Species Act. He has conducted over 160 research expeditions to unknown areas on five continents and teaches Environmental Science and Public Policy at George Mason University near DC. Is he the only champion driver with three advanced degrees?

To the question whether anything from Deep Springs helped shape his career, life, or philosophy, Lee responds: "The radically different points of view and educational backgrounds at Deep Springs." This might come as a surprise to those of us who look at photos from the 40s, in which visual homogeneity appears the most striking difference between then and now. Lee's reflection reminds us that diversity of many sorts can play a meaningful role in intimate working and academic relationships, and in ways that can be opaque to a third party or minimized by the sweep of history.

"Two of us were from the West," he says. "One of the things I remember sharply was for some time the other members of the SB looked down on the West as intellectually inferior and culturally backward. One of my own reasons for supporting co-ed is that in my experience females in classes buffer that sort of position and treatment. Just look at today's Washington Post headline of what's happening in Hollywood. We haven't got this figured out yet, but it's about time."

Lee treats racing as an intellectual endeavor (he is after all a scientist and a Deep Springer). And this is also why he has been able to race successfully into his late eighties. The physics of the sport is intellectual, anticipating his own future location on the track at 150 mph, but so is the mental training.

He admits he is more prone to fatigue at his age, but this just means shifting his practices so they don't affect his timing. He chooses earlier and earlier marks on the track to begin making choices about more gas or more brake as the race proceeds. He explains, "I make a biofeedback arrangement with myself, because you have to get ready mentally and then sustain it the whole race. When you've got twenty, thirty, or forty other cars, you have to know what they're all doing, too."

That means even though it takes longer for his eyes to communicate with his foot on the pedals, there is no external indication on video or to the other drivers that he is in fact adjusting his decision-making to accommodate his mind. "If you brake too early on a curve the other cars go by, and if you brake too late, well, it's embarrassing, expensive, and painful, all of which is counterproductive."

Lee's latest motorsports victory was in August of this year. He raced in Monterey, California, driving a 1967 Ginetta G4 to become the overall winner of the event. The award took note of his spry enthusiasm over six decades of accomplished racing. In case six decades sounds like a long time, it's all relative: he won his last race by six thousandths of a second.

Student Opinions on Internet and Isolation

- by Akash DS16, Aadit DS17 and John DS16

Akash:

Something strange has been happening in my generation. We are spending the least time with friends, we are entering the fewest relationships, and we are reporting the highest feelings of loneliness, since these statistics have been collected. We're spending less time outside, less time doing homework, less time working for pay, less time sleeping, but more time in our rooms. We are suffering a silent epidemic in the psychological realm. Across the country, we face an onslaught of serious mental illnesses, and particularly depression. This isn't coddled teenagers whining. In the issue closest to my heart, we face a massive rise in suicide rates, which are now the third leading cause of young death. And the most alarming thing about this epidemic, across all these metrics and many more, is that it began only about a decade ago and has been worsening every year since.

Buoyed by a growing wealth of direct experimental studies, the consensus of mental health professionals and researchers blame one primary culprit: the unprecedented pervasion of the internet into almost every facet of my generation's lives.

This is a context that I think is sorely lacking in discussions around the internet at Deep Springs. It is true that internet use is different at Deep Springs than outside—we use it less, for one, and it's less entangled with our immediate social lives, for another. If everyone used the internet as we do, I have no doubt America would be a healthier country. But it feels altogether too cavalier—and even a touch narcissistic—to dismiss the risks of the internet just because of these differences, to blithely assume that they inoculate us from the globe's diseases.

The internet undoubtedly provides some benefits to the Student Body. It facilitates committee work; it allows us to maintain relationships to friends and family; for certain classes, it can be a helpful tool for research; it helps us find statistics to use in essays railing against the internet.

But the internet also can be deeply destructive to the project we chose to pursue by enrolling at Deep Springs. A key element of Deep Springs is the ground rule that isolates us from the outside world in order to enable (some would say 'force') us to focus on building relationships and community in the valley. The internet inverts this principle, connecting us to the outside world but isolating us from each other. This is why David Neidorf, the only current inhabitant of the valley who has seen Deep Springs pre- and post- internet, reports that student complaints of the difficulty of forming meaningful relationships have grown in direct proportion to the increasing reliability of the internet.

But the tension between unlimited internet use and the mission of Deep Springs goes deeper than the isolation policy. The "Marx Weber Durkheim" class recently read an essay by the analytical Marxist Jon Elster which argued against the capitalist emphasis on consumption, and advocated for a greater emphasis in its place on self-realization. Capitalist economics assume that people want to consume things. Marxist economics assumes that people want to achieve things, want to do things well, want to create, and in their creation, to create themselves.

When we were admitted to Deep Springs, we received a letter telling us that this college did not offer an education through consumption, but instead through responsibility in all pillars, through intentional action towards our ends—in a word, through self-realization. Consumption is immediately gratifying, but ultimately leads to self-alienation, the type evidenced by the statistics I began this article with. Self-realization is immediately onerous, but ultimately leads to, well, a self. This principle seems to me the heart of the Deep Springs pedagogy.

The way most people use the internet, and indeed the way much of the internet's profit structure depends on people to use it, is of consumption. We robotically scroll through Facebook or vox.com or Netflix, following the whims of immediate gratification, clicking what websites put on the screen for us to click, losing track of time and purpose as we consume and consume and consume.

There is a way, I believe, to create a different kind of internet use at Deep Springs: we allow ourselves to use the internet on certain designated computers, but only after circulating a memo ("brainsplat") to the SB in which we articulate what exactly we will use it for. Thus students will only use the internet for purposes they themselves are comfortable with and unashamed of. They will use the internet to achieve their own ends — to develop and realize their selves.

I don't deny that this would incur some cost of private freedom of action. But such a libertarian argument would ignore a premise of self governance, of community life, which gives us justification to ask each other not to drink alcohol or leave the valley without cause, and more broadly to commit to all the various aspects of the Deep Springs project —that we may make demands on each other in order to allow each other, and our public, to flourish. That's why we're here.

Survey: Favorite Recent Books:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • <i>Labyrinths</i> -
Jorge Luis Borges | • <i>Our Word Is Our Weapon</i> -
Subcomandante Marcos |
| • <i>The Book of Laughter and Forgetting</i> -
Milan Kundera | • <i>Mr. Tickle Book</i> -
Roger Hargreaves |

Aadit:

As we celebrate our first hundred years, we cannot forget that a hundred years stretch before us, and that a precedent has already been set for how the SB interacts with changing technologies. All forms of major technological change were vehemently protested against in the past, but then gradually accepted for what they were: profoundly empowering. In keeping with the trend, Deep Springs' nauseating internet debates will soon fall away—as arguments over telephone access or mail delivery service have in the past—leaving us with new and exciting things to misunderstand, caricature, and hastily attempt to brand incompatible with the 'Nunnian ideal.' The caricatures made of Gutenberg's printing press were much the same that are used during SB meetings to keep the Cisco routers off.

The Internet helps Deep Springers keep in touch with the news and current affairs, much as periodicals do, but in much greater range of languages, areas-of-focus and political perspectives than can be found on the BH shelf. It allows our many students with family not living in the US to maintain connections with friends and loved ones without a +1 dialing code—for free. Our access to the internet also helps keep students in touch with the most powerful mode of information access known to humankind: Whereas there are no books on modern Chinese politics in the library, Therefore Be It Resolved that we search JSTOR and the Viet Nam News archives for 'South-China Sea' to educate ourselves.

A modern liberal arts education cannot simply concern itself with equipping students with accepted forms of timeless knowledge. It must also interrogate what constitutes this knowledge in the first place. Was the English historian Thomas Macaulay right when he said that he has 'never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia'? If not, how can we be comfortable with cutting ourselves off from the most effective way to access Sanskrit texts and Islamic art we have, given our limited means at Deep Springs? As we begin to rightfully question how to make the College more diverse, and more appealing to applicants less enchanted by the unique—but highly racialized and politicized—culture of the American West, we must accept that some of our founding ideals conflict with what we now want and think is important for the future of our school. We are no longer all sated by the Greek classics and op-eds from New York. We will soon no longer be all men. We cannot continue to pretend that the ideal of the rugged and lonely cowboy—who leaves his smartphone at home—does, or should, inspire all of us.

It is absolutely true that access to a constantly flowing social media feed can be addictive and wasteful, and our isolated setting can and should offer students the chance to experiment with their exposure to the barrage. Many students are indeed satisfied with the current offerings in the library and course catalog. But this experimentation cannot come at the cost of the freedom of those who do not believe they suffer from such addiction, or whose intellectual interests require access to resources only found online. Students should be free to form groups of like-minded peers who commit to the simple steps of leaving their phones and laptops in the dorms—which continue to lack WiFi infrastructure—and encourage each other to practice self-control. Attempts to force others with different levels of (useful and intellectually engaging) reliance on the internet is not just politically selfish, but also ultimately counterproductive to Deep Springs' educational goals.

John:

Another fall is well underway. We've turned off the irrigation pump, leaves are (almost) falling, there's a little frosty nip in the morning air, and, yes, we're debating the internet. In my year and a half here I've seen different forms of the same conversation about internet use play out many times over. Whatever form it takes, the discussion seems to operate on the same basic terms. Our choice, many in the SB would have you believe, is to live either in a laissez-faire world of unrestricted use, or to embark, all of us together, on the project of specific restriction, usually drastic, with a motion dictating the rules of said restriction, on penalty of censure. The problem is—with relative consistency, these internet-restricting motions have passed by a hair-thin margin.

The usual argument is that this is what SB is for. If we're undergoing a form of collective commitment, the thinking goes, that commitment ought to be legislated, with rules elucidated, and a punishment attached . . . even if the motion is only supported by sixteen of the thirty members of the student body. Wouldn't it be undemocratic to argue otherwise?

But I can't help wondering: If we regularly find ourselves indulging in a majoritarian politics, with the same winners and the same losers, are we really doing our due diligence to democratic governance? The answer, I think, is displeasing to those who view Deep Springs as a place in which we all grow together only if we all share the exact same set of commitments. That answer is no. If we settle for majoritarianism we're not succeeding at governance.

Regular majoritarianism is actually a failure of SB that should be taken as seriously as any other failure of SB, like struggling to uphold the ground rules or failing to elect competent leadership. If the same advocates regularly enact a policy disadvantageous to the same dissenters, this, while allowed within a democracy, actually means that the public forums for discussion—in our case discussions on motions—are failing to facilitate a fruitful exchange of ideas. Large scale democratic governments have bills of rights for this reason. Deep Springs, of course, should never have an SB bill of rights enshrining students' right to get on the web. But this is because we are small enough to recognize the creep of majoritarianism and put a stop to it. And we should. We do this by remaining in conversation until that conversation produces changes of opinion, and then, if it still fails to do so, by not passing legislation, supported as it may be by the majority, if it represents a pattern of majoritarian overreach.

My response to majoritarian blocs is this: Form voluntary groups outside of the larger SB to embark on self-improvement projects together. If you and fifteen other students want to stop using the internet, or start going to bed at 10 o'clock, or do a hundred pushups every morning, sleep on the main circle, eat nothing but DS veggies, and perform devotionals from the grey book, feel free! But do it on your own before requiring it of us all .

Poetry Spotlight

Enchantments

This cigarette burns but is never consumed.
This cell phone makes phone calls to the dead.
Here is the number of a girl who gives protection
from fidelity. These are not loaves of bread,
but photographs of bread pasted to stones
which fill weird hungers, and can be resold.
He who sits on this carpet is unable to speak.
He who looks in this mirror is already old.
Quiet friend, you look like you could use a hand
on your reset button to unclench that throat.
If no one built the button in, if no one finds one
sewn into you, like a coin in a coat's lining,
do some of these lines: feel the words climb up
inside you and leap out as if you were on fire.
In a forest, in the backwoods of your suburb
crush this paper flower with your tongue,
swallow the wasp who comes: you learn
to change a person's love for you to fame
using nothing but your tongue and time.

-David Gorin

David is teaching Modern Essay this fall. Most recently he has been teaching poetry at Yale.

Thanksgiving

The lion's mane on the gingko has turned
deeper than ripe pear, darker than a street-fair
jar of honey or pair of beeswax candles. The rain
will pull it off by morning. Water drools
down the window and makes pools where later
the blue sky of winter blue will sit. Later still
Thanksgiving sunset, and sunrise after it
fresh and bloody above the prickled horizon.
I love the crows who guard the meadow
with windy caws. The garden has opened
its mouth and is waiting for snow to pour
in. Red twine unspools in the hands tying
early trees to Christmas cars. Pines that drank
the summer broth are now as crisp as the wrist-
frozen water of the river Toe. Bare blonde
hills. The almond inside you exposed
and ready to eat. Crumpled red paper
of evening. Turn on the lights
to see the faces. Bulbs pale
under the earth. A cricket appeared
by my bedside having made the long trek
inside, but when I woke he had died.
I haven't removed his little shell; I don't know
the ceremonies. I wouldn't want to toss him
like combing away meaning in a tangle of curls.

-Sarah Stickney

Sarah was the writing instructor over summer seminar. She teaches writing at St John's in Annapolis.

Withrow Speakers



Ayesha Khan



Varun Gauri

Every year, the student body invites a few select academics, professionals, or artists to visit the valley and give speeches to the community. We had the pleasure of welcoming Ayesha Khan and her husband Varun Gauri, along with their three children. Ayesha is a litigator in Washington, DC. Throughout her career, she has worked on over thirty-five Supreme Court cases. She has worked extensively in litigating First Amendment law as part of the ACLU National Prison Program, and as part of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. She spoke to us about her life and how she approaches different legal issues.

Varun is Senior Economist in Development Economics Vice Presidency and co-leads the Mind, Behavior, and Development Unit at the World Bank. His work focuses on integrating behavioral science into economic policy in countries in the Global South—in his words, designing policies for “real people,” not economists. He has worked on the World Development Report 2015: Mind, Society, and Behavior, been covered in numerous national news outlets, has been published in a variety of journals, and has published three books. Varun is by no means a newcomer to Deep Springs—he first visited the valley in 1995, when he taught a Summer Seminar with David Neidorf.

**white feathers
trailing through the field—
the snow kept falling
Michel Ge DS17**

so heavy!

**the library
with its silences
Michel Ge DS17**

Andy Kim “Congresses-up” for New Jersey

- by John Dewis DS94

“I would be a fundamentally different person if I had not gone to Deep Springs,” says Andy Kim DS00, who is running for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives to represent New Jersey’s 3rd District. “Deep Springs was the pivotal moment in my life and fundamental to why I’m running for office.”

Andy attributes this to a clear mission: “For other schools it’s hard to say what the mission is, but Deep Springs’ service to humanity has become a part of who I am and how I understand my connection and responsibility to people around me.”

Iris Pope used to tell Andy to “cowboy up.” But Andy always wanted to be an astronaut, so it became “astronaut up” and then later “ambassador up.” It was her way to keep him motivated in the right way when things got tiring or stressful. “The values that keep you straight,” he says, “I got them here.”



Andy remembers feeling isolated from world events on 9/11, but Deep Springs provided critical distance to think big: “I decided right then to go into foreign policy of the middle east and trained myself and got immersed. I have done exactly what I wanted.”

He and classmate Dan Shu set up an Ethics class with Jack Newell “in the Deep Springs tradition of seeking answers to the questions that bug you the most without being afraid of the ambitiousness or of asking questions that don’t ever have answers.” Studying John Lewis in Ross Peterson’s Civil Rights class made Andy realize a teenager was capable of meaningful political change.

Andy was a Truman Scholar (2003) at University of Chicago and Rhodes Scholar (2005) to Oxford, and strategic advisor to General Petraeus in Obama’s White House. I asked him three questions.

What’s the biggest problem in politics today? “Narrow vision. Today I took my two-year-old boy to the doctor, and a complete stranger to me was entrusted with the life that means the most to me. We do not have control over everything and do need to rely on other folks. At Deep Springs, we drew that line with clarity that does not exist anywhere else in the world.”

What’s the most important skill you learned at Deep Springs? “There is a reason Composition and Public Speaking are the two required courses: it is how you communicate. I had to learn to balance emotions with reasons. It’s not just trying to build your intellect and create a reservoir in your head, you are constantly reminded of your embeddedness in a community, constantly understanding that this is not about me- it is about something much bigger.”

What was his best moment in the Valley? “I always loved hiking up the rim of the valley down by the lake. You look across the valley and see the College there just a small blip of green in such contrast with what’s around and you think humans were not really supposed to inhabit there, but if everyone does their jobs and works hard the surrounding harshness will not consume us.”



Damon Rich DS93 Named MacArthur Genius

- by John Dewis DS94

In 1992, I interviewed celebrated Philadelphia columnist Darrell Sifford for our tiny school newspaper, *The Index*. He promptly, tragically, drowned in Belize, and my interview was his last. I waited until 1999 for my next interview: celebrated sculptor Claes van Oldenburg for the *Harvard Crimson*. He is still alive today at eighty-eight.

Oldenburg and his partner the sculptor Coosje van Bruggen spent an hour with me revealing such pearls of wisdom on art, life, and work, that I felt privy to artistic truths no one had any business knowing. Even Coosje was surprised, saying to Claes, "I've never heard you say that before." It turned out that my tape recorder was on pause the entire time, and the interview, and the article, belonged to the ether.

Last Tuesday I interviewed Damon Rich DS93 and the conversation was reminiscent of Oldenburg two decades ago. It's no surprise, since Damon is a certified genius since winning the MacArthur two weeks ago. He said things, and I wrote them down, that were so revelatory about his time at Deep Springs, and how it helped shape his aims and efficacy as an urban planner, that I felt the insights were almost unfair. When I hit "save" Microsoft Word crashed, and every word was lost, despite my strong suspicion that today the ether saves everything.

I will tell you the three big insights I remember, absent any direct quotations.

The first is that space at Deep Springs is unusual in ways that beg to be thought about. You can put a chair in a field and it might stay there for weeks. Someone might even put something on the chair. Then one day it will be gone, and you will see the same chair at the dairy. Whatever happens, someone has done it. Last week I noticed a sign above the tack room door in the barn, reminding us not to leave reins touching floor or the mice will chew them. It took Mark Rutschman-Byler DS94 five minutes, a sharpie, and piece of cardboard to put up the sign when he was a student; it has now directed some 300 students, four ranch managers, and the mice are still unhappy about it.

Space at Deep Springs is democratic: few restric-

tions about what goes where, and no set hierarchy for who gets to put what where. Last week a guest leaving the valley asked me if I could return a borrowed external hard-drive to Michael Leger DS16. I walked it across the main circle where Michael was playing soccer to ask where I should leave it. He said, "Oh just put it..." and he looked to the student dorm, then the BH, then the main building, and then back at me and said, "Just put it... anywhere." Democratic space might also mean any spot is as good as any other.

When Damon and his partner Jae design a park, they imagine all possible uses for the space, interviewing all stakeholders, including the under-seen or under-represented. This makes for famously interesting, versatile

spaces to welcome many people and uses. As one possible source of inspiration, the main circle at Deep Springs might accommodate, during a given 24-hour cycle: sleepers, soccer players, lizard-catchers, Frisbee throwers, package receivers, lawn mowers, sunset watchers, walkers from there to here, a thousand tiny meaningful conversations, dogs, chickens, BH overflow, and a fire emergency simulation to put out an imaginary fire with a vintage truck and hoses.

Damon also speaks to a second democratic feature of Deep Springs: decision-making. Everything is subject to scrutiny and disagreement. If you want something to happen, you have to persuade people. You have to acquaint yourself with your own reasons, and you have to make those reasons public. And for good reason: decisions at Deep Springs affect people, and those people are you and people you know. If, in the outside world, we understand that people are also people, and treat our decisions as if they affect real people, then we tend to make better decisions. Part of what makes them better is that we remember to consult with those whom the decision is likely to affect. Simple, practical, ethical.

Democratic space at Deep Springs trains us to navigate bureaucracy by showing us what life is like without it. Damon attributes his success to knowing how to get things done; when a bureaucracy seems bent on saying "No," just



find the person within it who can say, “If we do it like this it might work.” Sometimes we are that person. My vantage on skills we learn at Deep Springs is privileged because I spend so much time talking with alums. Zac Unger DS91 told me recently, apiece with Damon’s claim, that he has been effective as the VP of Oakland’s Firefighters Union because of his ability to make bureaucracies nimbler.

Deep Springs might be the first place where we learn our own power and how to use it for good. And Deep Springers as a group are better equipped than anyone I know to interact meaningfully with both the people in charge and the people who aren’t. Perhaps because we understand the secret of all institutional life: everyone matters. Damon and Jae enlisted the help of youngsters to interview interest groups around the city of Newark before designing a park, inverting the typical model of use assessment, which is top-down.

Finally, there is a feeling at Deep Springs, as Damon remembers it, where everything is always threatening to fall apart. In other words: there is no one here, strictly speaking, whose job it is to step in to make sure everything goes okay. It is one of the great insights of David Neidorf as College President that he sees in this arrangement a counterintuitive source of stability and an unparalleled pedagogical opportunity. In most institutions, we are buffered from our mistakes by mechanisms designed to make things run smoothly. In fact, a perceived benefit of being part of an institution might be precisely that it protects us from one another and ourselves. Deep Springs creates a context where your mistakes matter (to the point of cliché), and so we learn to take responsibility for the institution, one another, and ourselves. Deep Springs, you might say, is too small to fail.

Julian Petri DS04, who is on the founding faculty of the Sequoyah School in Pasadena, reflected recently on Deep Springs, that it is the rare institution that asks us to identify fully with it. Everything that matters to the School matters to us. Which helps explain the ennui many of us feel when we leave, to discover not only that we appear not to matter, but that we don’t matter by design, and that no one else appears bothered by it. It also explains the instant mutual recognition and camaraderie enjoyed by alums separated by decades in the Valley.

Post-Deep Springs ennui does not appear, to me, the fallen crest of two years of self-involvement; it is the pain of seeing that the meaning of our work is delimited by the scope of our assigned activity. My first memory of School life after Deep Springs was getting

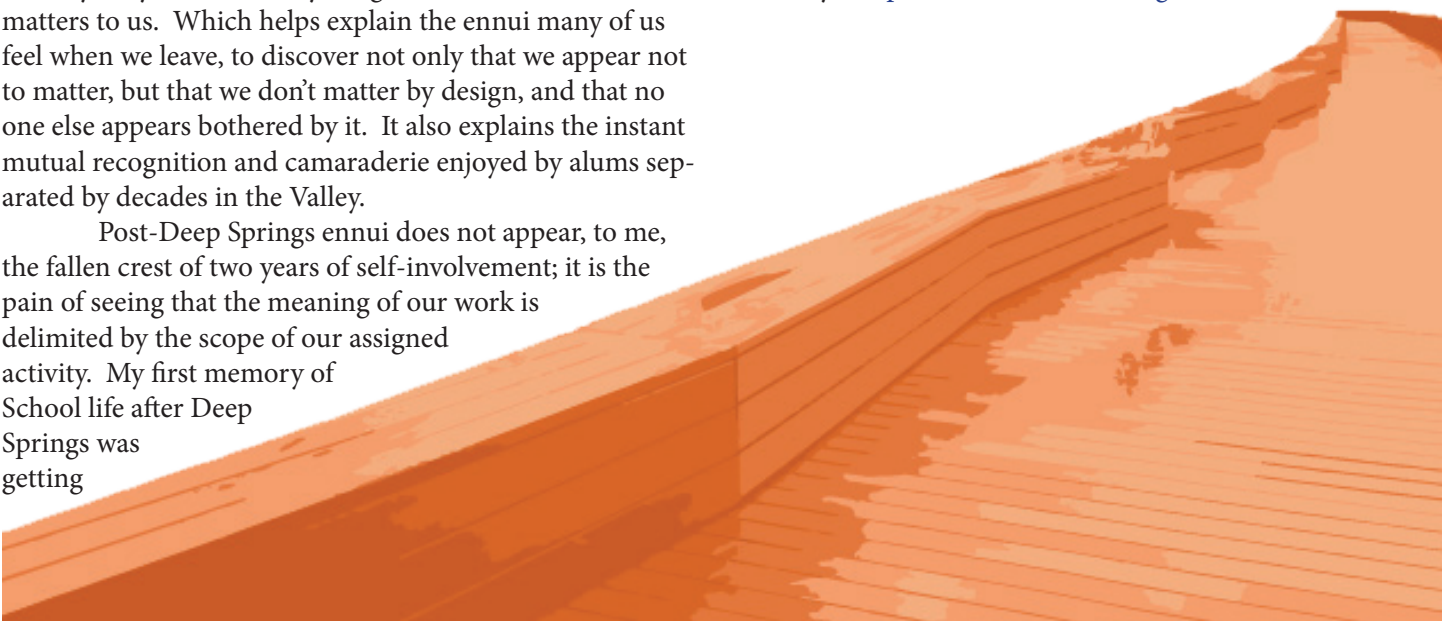
reprimanded by the Harvard Housing Office for changing a light bulb in my dorm room. Of course, the division of labor in highly populous society means that “there are people for that” whose livelihood depends on our not doing it. But the effect this boundary has on your body is profound, because the division of labor might suggest that your hands are not expected to enjoy their utility. Unless you become a doctor, or a painter, or an athlete.

Beyond this, most institutions we love are not designed for us to play a role in their survival. They are transactional: do your work and get the degree, or the money, or the whatever. I knew a school head whose opening salvo to faculty in September was, “Let me be clear: you are all replaceable.” She was of course right, if we assume we are defined by our job titles. Someone else can, and ultimately will, do every job.

Time at Deep Springs encourages the opposite call to service: “Whoever you are, you matter, and I would like to thank you in advance for helping shape this place in a way that no one else could.” At Deep Springs our ultimate fungibility is an institutional matter of course: we are constantly swapping jobs, and one job is to find our replacements and admit them as students. In Damon’s reflection on his and Jae’s work at Hector Design, he inspires us to ask this better question, given our transience: what would it take to identify more fully with an institution? And his work implicitly asks: what would life be like if we identified fully with the city where we live?

Congratulations, Damon, on your MacArthur. You join Deep Springs alums Erik Mueggler DS80 who received the award in 2002 and Ray Jeanloz DS70 who received the award in 1988.

Please visit the MacArthur Foundation website here to read about Damon: <https://www.macfound.org/fellows/997/> and about Eric: <https://www.macfound.org/fellows/693/> and Ray: <https://www.macfound.org/fellows/337/>



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The Communications Committee is making some changes to the website and wants to include more information on alums. Students are interested to hear about what alums are doing.

Please email us at comcom@deepsprings.edu.

Text and design by the students of the Deep Springs College Communications Committee:

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Many thanks to Niki Frishman and John Dewis.

A few members of classes DS15, 16, 44 and 45 at the Centennial.



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