

Newsletter of the
Weatherhead Center for International Affairs

Centerpiece

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FEATURE P. 8

How Can Universities Address the Crisis in Democracy?

FEATURE P. 14

Dispatches: Undergraduate Researchers in the Field

Weatherhead

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Peter Sheridan (p. 21); Melani Cammett and Dame Louise Richardson (p. 8). Credit: Bethany Versoy

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Weatherhead Research Cluster on Identity Politics / Canada Program / Student Programs



Erin Goodman
Executive Director;
Interim Director of the
Weatherhead Scholars
Program

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Beyond the walls of the Weatherhead Center, much of the world is roiled by instability. As the effects of the war in the Middle East reverberate around the globe, including on Harvard's campus, we continue to strive to make a positive contribution through our expansive network of scholars, students, and practitioners across borders and disciplines. Our Weatherhead Forum series, *The War in Israel/Palestine*, aims to bring together people with different perspectives to provide context on current events. The first part of the series took place on December 4, and additional events will be held during the spring semester.

This series is not the only way we have addressed violent conflict. In our first Weatherhead Forum this semester, we invited activists, diplomats, and former militants from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Lebanon to discuss how they made the transition to peace, in conversation with Weatherhead Center Director Melani Cammett. We also hosted Peter Sheridan, a former police commander in Northern Ireland, who shared his experiences on the force during thirty-five years of conflict. Violence leads to the erosion of trust, he told us, which needs to be rebuilt in order to move forward. Both of these events were sponsored by our newest research cluster on identity politics, chaired by Melani Cammett, which explores ways to improve intergroup relations in postconflict contexts. I invite you to read more about the cluster's activities on page 21.

Another topic dominating news headlines around the world is the threat to democracy—both the global decline in democratic governments and the national decline in democratic politics in many countries. Dame Louise Richardson, former vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, spoke on the role of universities in combating this trend at our Jodidi Lecture on November 8. She cited reports detailing a rise in inequality and autocracies alongside deterioration in freedom of expression, government censorship, and quality of elections. Dame Richardson made a convincing case that universities—as bastions of openness, mobility, and transformation—can help mitigate the crisis of democracy. Read more about her ideas on page 8.

In my inaugural column as executive director, I'd like to thank my predecessor, Ted Gilman, for his efforts in this same role throughout eight years at the Weatherhead Center. Ted guided us through transitioning our initiatives to research clusters and navigating the challenges presented by COVID-19, and we thank him for his service to our community.

In other news, this semester we welcomed George Soroka as our new executive officer of The Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies. Diana Ocampo Belloso joined us as the new coordinator for the Scandinavian Consortium for Organizational Research (SCANCOR) at the Weatherhead Center, and her predecessor, Catherine Nehring, now serves as coordinator for the Sustainability Transparency Accountability Research (STAR) Lab alongside Professor Michael J. Hiscox. We also launched a new Weatherhead brand this academic year with Moth Design. It includes a robust messaging platform that outlines our key messages and encourages consistency across our written and verbal communications as well as a complete visual rebrand which you can see manifested in this current issue of *Centerpiece*.

Even amid global upheaval, we hope that the Weatherhead Center will remain a safe harbor for all members of our community, both near and far. We will continue asking big questions in the pursuit of a broader understanding of complex global issues, and we hope you will join us.

Sincerely,
Erin Goodman

Cover: View of Bolivia's capital city La Paz, with Mt. Illimani in the background. Image taken from the teleférico, a gondola that runs from La Paz up to El Alto. Read more about Laura Connor's experience on page 15. Credit: Laura Connor

Of Note

Adriana Chira Wins James A. Rawley Prize

Former Postdoctoral Fellow **Adriana Chira**, now associate professor of Atlantic World history at Emory University, is the recipient of the 2023 James A. Rawley Prize for the book *Patchwork Freedoms: Law, Slavery, and Race beyond Cuba's Plantations* (Cambridge University Press). The prize, awarded annually since 1998 through the American Historical Association, recognizes outstanding historical writing that explores aspects of integration of Atlantic worlds before the twentieth century.



Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way Win Juan Linz Best Book Prize

Faculty Associate **Steven Levitsky**, David Rockefeller Professor of Latin American Studies at Harvard University, is the recipient (along with coauthor Lucan Way) of the 2023 Juan Linz Best Book Prize, Democracy & Autocracy section of the American Political Science Association, for the book *Revolution and Dictatorship: The Violent Origins of Durable Authoritarianism* (Princeton University Press). The book was also shortlisted for the 2023 Lionel Gelber Prize, a literary award for the world's best nonfiction book in English on foreign affairs that seeks to deepen public debate on significant international issues.

Marc Melitz Wins Onassis Prize 2023 in International Trade

Faculty Associate **Marc Melitz**, David A. Wells Professor of Political Economy at Harvard University, is one of three world-leading academics to win the 2023 Onassis Prize in International Trade. Established in 1978 by Aristotle Onassis's hand-written will, the Onassis Prizes recognize outstanding individuals and organizations across the fields of finance, international trade, and shipping—the three fields representing the areas in which Onassis himself excelled.

Victor Chu Wins Global Citizen Award from Atlantic Council

Advisory Committee Member **Victor L.L. Chu**, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, First Eastern Investment Group, received the 2023 Distinguished Service Award from the Atlantic Council. Held annually during the United Nations General Assembly week in New York, the Global Citizen Awards recognizes a vast array of global citizens, ranging from heads of state to world-renowned artists. Chu was among a distinguished group of honorees that included Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, US Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen, and more.

Michael Herzfeld Receives Honorary Doctorate

Faculty Associate (emeritus) **Michael Herzfeld**, Ernest E. Monrad Research Professor of the Social Sciences at Harvard University, was awarded an honorary doctorate—

the degree of Doctor of Letters, honoris causa—at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. Herzfeld was given this honor as he is one of the most influential anthropologists of the past fifty years, whose credentials stretch across disciplines and comparative area studies.



Student Eleanor Wikstrom Wins Rhodes Scholarship

Undergraduate Associate **Eleanor Villafranca Wikstrom**, from the Committee on Degrees in Social Studies at Harvard College, is one of ten Harvard students named Rhodes Scholars this year. Created in 1902 through the will of Cecil Rhodes, Rhodes Scholarships cover all expenses for two or three years of study at Oxford. Wikstrom's research focuses on the twentieth-century US system of English-only education in the Philippines as a form of epistemic colonialism. At Oxford, she will pursue studies in imperial and global history and in US history.

Kenneth Shepsle Wins William H. Riker Prize

Faculty Associate (emeritus) **Kenneth Shepsle**, George D. Markham Research Professor of Government at Harvard University, is the recipient of the William H. Riker Prize for Political Science. The award honors a social scientist in recognition of a body of research that exemplifies and advances the scientific study of politics in the spirit of William

Riker. Shepsle received the prize for “advancing the scientific study of politics through research in the formal political theory of structure-induced equilibria, agenda setting and committees, and parliamentary institutions.”



Melani Cammett Receives 2023 Star-Friedman Challenge Award

Center Director **Melani Cammett** is among the recipients of the Star-Friedman Challenge for Promising Scientific Research, an award given annually through an endowment at Harvard University. The award offers opportunities for eligible faculty to seek support for new work in their research programs within the life, physical, and social sciences. Melani Cammett, Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs at Harvard University, received the award for her project, “Toleration: Living Together after Ethnic Conflict.”

Daniel Carpenter and Theda Skocpol Win APSA Career Awards

Faculty Associates **Daniel Carpenter** and **Theda Skocpol** each received a career award at the annual APSA (American Political Science Association) meeting and exhibition. Daniel Carpenter, Allie S. Freed Professor of Government at Harvard University, received the 2023 John Gaus Award for a career of exemplary scholarship in the joint tradition

of political science and public administration. Theda Skocpol, Victor S. Thomas Professor of Government and Sociology at Harvard University, received the 2023 James Madison Award for an American political scientist who has made a distinguished scholarly contribution to political science.

Victor Seow Wins Michael H. Hunt Prize for International History

Faculty Associate **Victor Seow**, associate professor of the history of science at Harvard University, is the recipient of the 2023 Michael H. Hunt Prize for International History for his book, *Carbon Technocracy: Energy Regimes in Modern East Asia* (University of Chicago Press). The prize committee deemed Seow’s book “to be a highly original study emphasizing the centrality of energy extraction to questions of international politics, war, and diplomacy.” The award was presented at the annual SHAFR (Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations) Conference.

Several Faculty Associates Win Salata Institute Grants

The Salata Institute Seed Grant Program, launched this year at Harvard University to enable new interdisciplinary research in climate and sustainability, announced its first cohort of awards. Among the recipients are Faculty Associates **Mina Cikara** and **Dustin Tingley** for a project that focuses on communicating the benefits of climate action; Faculty Associate **Rema Hanna** for a project on studying electricity subsidies and consumption in a developing world; and former

Center Director **Michèle Lamont** for a project on recognizing Indigenous claims for environmental justice.



Ping-hsiu Alice Lin Receives IACS Dissertation Prize

Academy Scholar **Ping-hsiu Alice Lin** is the recipient of a dissertation prize from the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society for her dissertation titled, “Precious Economies: Gems and Value-Making in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Borderlands.” Lin’s research focuses on movement, labor, and associated practices that transform rough minerals into precious stones in the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands.

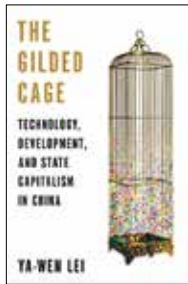
Daniel Agbiboa Wins Two APSA Awards

Faculty Associate **Daniel Agbiboa**, assistant professor of African and African American studies at Harvard University, is the recipient of two 2023 awards from the American Political Science Association (APSA): the Clarence Stone Scholar Award for “making a significant contribution to the study of urban politics” (Urban and Local Politics Section) and the Politics & Gender Best Article Award (Women, Gender & Politics Section) for the article, “Out of the Shadows: The Women Countering Insurgency in Nigeria” published in *Politics & Gender*.

WWW • For a full list of “Of Note” visit Centerpiece online: wefia.harvard.edu/publications/centerpiece

New Books

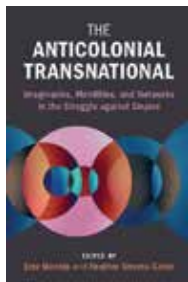
Presenting Recent Publications by Weatherhead Center Affiliates



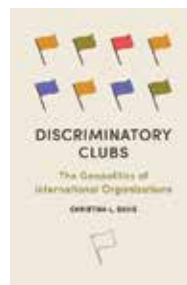
The Gilded Cage: Technology, Development, and State Capitalism in China
Princeton University Press
By Ya-Wen Lei • Faculty Associate
• professor of sociology at Harvard University



The Russo-Ukrainian War: The Return of History
W. W. Norton
By Serhii Plokhy • Faculty Associate
• Mykhailo S. Hrushevs'kyi Professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard University



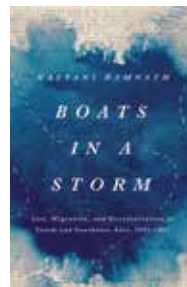
The Anticolonial Transnational: Imaginaries, Mobilities, and Networks in the Struggle against Empire
Cambridge University Press
Coedited by Erez Manela • Faculty Associate • Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History at Harvard University



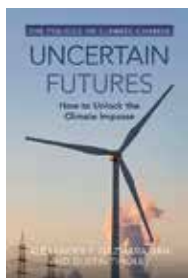
Discriminatory Clubs: The Geopolitics of International Organizations
Princeton University Press
By Christina L. Davis • Faculty Associate • Edwin O. Reischauer Professor of Japanese Politics at Harvard University



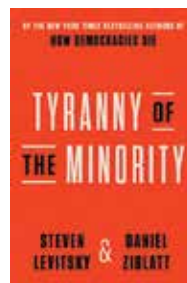
Seeing Others: How Recognition Works—and How It Can Heal a Divided World
Simon & Schuster
By Michèle Lamont • Former Center Director • Robert I. Goldman Professor of European Studies, professor of sociology and of African and African American studies at Harvard University



Boats in a Storm: Law, Migration, and Decolonization in South and Southeast Asia, 1942–1962
Stanford University Press
By Kalyani Ramnath • Former Postdoctoral Fellow • assistant professor of history at the University of Georgia



Uncertain Futures: How to Unlock the Climate Impasse
Cambridge University Press
Coauthored by Dustin Tingley • Faculty Associate • professor of government at Harvard University



Tyranny of the Minority: Why American Democracy Reached the Breaking Point
Penguin Random House
By Steven Levitsky • Faculty Associate • David Rockefeller Professor of Latin American Studies at Harvard University / By Daniel Ziblatt • Faculty Associate • Eaton Professor of the Science of Government at Harvard University

WWW • For a full list of “New Books” visit the Centerpiece online:
wcfa.harvard.edu/publications/centerpiece



IN MEMORIAM

Henry Kissinger 1923–2023

mission: arms control and the domestic sources of West German foreign policy. The former proved most productive, and Kissinger’s 1961 book *The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy* synthesized contemporary thinking on deterrence and limited war—much of which derived from the community of scholars facilitated by the CFIA.

Always keen to influence policymaking, Kissinger briefly consulted for the Kennedy National Security Council from 1961–1962. Of course, this was merely preamble to his life’s most consequential work: his 1969 appointment as National Security Advisor under President Richard Nixon.

Kissinger leaves behind a complicated legacy that world leaders, scholars, and the global public will wrestle with for years to come.



—**David Atkinson**, Associate Professor, History Department, Purdue University. Author of *In Theory and In Practice: Harvard’s Center for International Affairs, 1958–1983* (Harvard University Press, 2008).

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger passed away at 100 on November 29, 2023, in Kent, Connecticut. He was 100 years old.

Sixty-five years ago, Center for International Affairs founder Robert R. Bowie assembled a small group of faculty members to support his vision for “advanced study of basic problems in international affairs.” Among them was Dr. Kissinger, then a young government professor who Bowie appointed associate director. Upon joining Bowie in 1957, Kissinger was already directing a range of related activities, including Harvard’s own International Seminar as well as its Defense Studies Program.

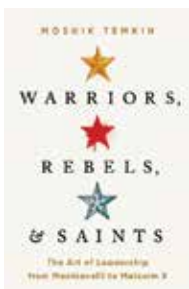
During his years at the Center, Kissinger focused on two areas of research fundamental to the Center’s founding



In the Shadow of Quetzalcoatl: Zelia Nuttall and the Search for Mexico’s Ancient Civilizations

Harvard University Press

By Merilee Grindle • Faculty Associate (emerita) • Edward S. Mason Professor of International Development, Emerita, at Harvard Kennedy School



Warriors, Rebels, and Saints: The Art of Leadership from Machiavelli to Malcolm X

Hachette Book Group

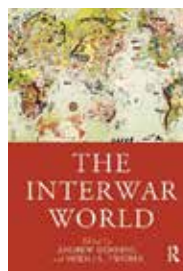
By Moshik Temkin • Former Faculty Associate • Distinguished Visiting Professor of Leadership and History at Schwarzman College, Tsinghua University



Precarious Ties: Business and the State in Authoritarian Asia

Oxford University Press

By Meg Rithmire • Faculty Associate • F. Warren McFarlan Associate Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School



The Interwar World


Routledge

Coedited by Heidi J.S. Tworek • Former Visiting Fellow • associate professor of history and public policy at the University of British Columbia

Henry Kissinger holds his last seminar at the CFIA on December 16, 1968, before leaving for Washington to become national security advisor in the Nixon administration. Photo credit: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University

How Can Universities Address the Crisis in Democracy?

edited by Lauren McLaughlin

An illustration of a student with dark hair, wearing a red jacket and a dark backpack, walking away from the viewer on a red walkway. The walkway is flanked by red railings. In the background, there are university buildings, including a prominent dome on the right and a steeple on the left. The sky is bright blue with large, white, stylized clouds and several birds flying. The overall style is flat and graphic.

On Wednesday, November 8, 2023, Dame Louise Richardson delivered the Samuel L. and Elizabeth Jodidi Lecture at Harvard University. She spoke about declining democracy around the world, sharing sobering statistics from the UK and US in particular. Richardson made the case that universities can alter outcomes and secure positive change to address this multifaceted crisis, but it will require courage, determination, and a united response.

Lightly edited and excerpted below is a portion of Richardson's talk where she focuses on the specific elements universities can foster. The full lecture, including a lively Q&A at the end, is available on the Weatherhead YouTube channel.

Universities, then, are already key nurturers and preservers of democracy. They are, as I've suggested, complex ecosystems, in which a diverse group of people can find habitats that support their intellectual and imaginative growth. They are, from an ideas point of view, species rich. Just as rainforests are essential sites of biodiversity that help us to conserve and generate a host of life forms, some of them new to human eyes, so universities are essential sites that help us to conserve and generate living knowledge to the greater benefit of humankind.

We need to preserve them. And more than that, to preserve their health, to resist attempts to destroy their long-term benefits for short-term gain. Just as rainforests sequester carbon helping to support our atmosphere, removing toxins, and making air breathable, universities too are crucial to supporting a healthier atmosphere in civil discourse based on facts, reasoned debate, and broadmindedness. **But to achieve this, universities need—consciously—to foster tolerance and encourage participation.**

In their teaching, particularly their insistence on teaching respect for global histories, the legacies of peaceful protest, and the evolution of democratic thought, universities can educate students to a wide arc of cultural traditions and a less Western-centric idea of development than was once the norm. They can train students to see issues from multiple perspectives, to practice shifting viewpoints, to argue from one side and then the other. They can help students to develop their mental flexibility as well as strength. They can foster understanding of different political practices and consider how to improve democratic systems. They can teach students how to dispute civilly and well.

We need to be nimbler at creating more welcoming, less gladiatorial spaces, and better constructive models for debate where there is room for more shades of opinion, more diverse faces and voices to be seen and heard. If we are to be convincing in this endeavor, we need to have more ideological diversity amongst our faculty, and a greater willingness to engage publicly and respectfully across different perspectives.

Universities can also consciously help students gain experience of thinking together collaboratively as well as individually. Students benefit from learning how to negotiate, how to make concessions, how to change

their minds and enjoy doing so, how to find a workable solution to a problem where many different actors have different priorities. Not merely scoring points, but building consensus.

Students who have this experience in university will surely translate it into political participation post university, and arrest the escalating rise in youth disillusionment with politics. Universities can model democracy, the good society, the fair workplace, the well-run debating chamber where everyone feels welcome speaking. They can also model equal rights and fairness, particularly in being inclusive and committed to policies that allow access to higher education on the basis of merit and potential, rather than the advantage of social class, prior educational privilege, family connections, or sporting prowess.

Universities also need to make it easier for disadvantaged students to get there and to get on once they are there. We need to see this as an investment in democracy in its widest sense. It is part of how we keep our institutions and public spaces open, fair, and inclusive. If we want a more representative parliamentary democracy or any kind of democracy, universities are a really good place to affirm equality of opportunity and help to create a more diverse cohort of leaders, managers, and voters.

“I think universities can help us to vaccinate people against disease but also against the viruses of misinformation and hate speech.”

— Dame Louise Richardson

It goes without saying that universities as wealthy as this one are in a position to be extremely generous, but the numbers Harvard touches are relatively small. But the question is whether institutions like Harvard have a responsibility to those beyond our gates. **In addition to being accessible, universities also need to be safe.** They have a long and proud tradition of acting as sanctuaries for scholars suffering from repressive governments and political threats to their safety, and for those who've been forcibly displaced by war, famine, or other forms of social collapse.

Many universities during the Second World War took in eminent scholars fleeing from the Nazis. Some of the most generous American colleges in accepting Jewish

refugee scholars were historically Black universities. Teachers who are themselves known to discrimination stretched out a hand of friendship to those of a different skin color who had also faced repression.

So resisting tyranny is another important way in which universities address the crisis in democracy. They enable voices to be heard and research to progress that would otherwise be silenced. One of my most uplifting experiences at Oxford was watching the Central University and the colleges come together, which doesn't happen very often, but coming together to support Ukrainian students and scholars.

We decided to offer up to twenty full scholarships to Ukrainian students, and we did this with the confident assumption that we'd get a handful of applications. And we got over 800 applications. Over 200 of them were qualified and we took twenty students. And at Carnegie, we are supporting some programs, including one based at Oxford, to help both Ukrainian and Russian scholars who are displaced by the war. Here, our efforts are focused on supporting scholars to remain in the region in order to facilitate their return post conflict to rebuild their universities.

And then freedom of speech. **I believe that universities should be places where freedom of speech is practiced daily,** for students and staff have the right to challenge one another intellectually in open forum and to offend one another. There are naturally well established legal limits to all freedom of speech and I'm not suggesting for a moment that we violate them. But I do believe that we should facilitate the expression of all legal speech.

Surely, it is better to hear an extreme view expressed openly and robustly challenged than for unpopular speakers to be canceled before they can say a word, or for zealots of any hue to speak only behind closed doors to a loyal following. The British government, as you may know, has recently appointed a free speech czar to regulate universities. Personally, I find this difficult to see as anything other than a populist move in the culture wars and an effort to undermine the autonomy of universities.

It comes from the very same government that gave us the Prevent legislation which prohibits the expression of

views antithetical to British values at British universities. I fear the UK government's commitment to freedom of speech, and they are very far from alone in this, is limited to speech with which they agree. Recently in Britain, free speech has become a weapon in the arsenal of the right against the left. But we must never allow freedom of speech to be owned by the left or right. All universities, I believe, should see it as their mission to uphold it.



Dame Louise Richardson. Credit: Bethany Versoy

It's also the privilege of universities to keep open channels of academic communication where international conflict or dispute mean that other forms of diplomacy are narrowed or closed. Never underestimate the power of universities to continue intellectual and social dialogue that benefits democracy and diplomatic relationships. Brexit, as you know, has threatened relationships between Britain and Europe in the worlds of commerce and politics. But British and American universities continue to exchange ideas with colleagues, students, fewer students, but still students, providing wildlife corridors that allow free movement and collaborative projects to thrive. It's imperative that they continue to do so.

Major threats to future human peace and security transcend national borders. From climate change and biodiversity loss to invasive species, new diseases, microbial resistance to antibiotics, hostile developments, and AI warfare, we need the open knowledge sharing

and the trusted partnerships that universities provide to respond quickly and effectively. As threats to peace and security are typically also threats to democratic function, universities could probably be regarded as circuit breakers for sudden global shocks. In strengthening their international partnerships and soft diplomacy, they protect our global commons.

I tend to think that a good example of this is the COVID vaccine developed by Oxford University during the pandemic in collaboration with global partners in business and research, including the British-Swedish company AstraZeneca, research centers in Kenya and Thailand, testing centers in South Africa and Brazil, and manufacturing centers in India. Universities are also reliable knowledge banks that stay open even during an international crash. They provide remarkable services, often at cost again, the Oxford COVID vaccine, which was distributed at cost, in this regard is both a literal example and a metaphor. I think universities can help us to vaccinate people against disease but also against the viruses of misinformation and hate speech.

Universities are—or should be—havens of research, reasoned debate, knowledge-based evidence, and planning for the future. This research serves many ends that actively supports democracy. It can show us how to understand our world, how best to alleviate poverty, and enhance public health, explain voting patterns, democratize digital access to information. It can help the world to predict the energy needs plus the likelihood of pandemics and other catastrophes, and protect them from their worst effects.

In addition, of course, the curiosity-driven research that belongs in, and is nurtured by, universities often has unintended but significant benefit through technological and scientific discoveries from batteries to radio waves, not to mention gene editing. **Universities also investigate and disseminate the truth—of history, of identity, of culture—making it less easy to spin false narratives.** This has never been more important.

Conspiracy theories are rife and the digital attempts to confuse and manipulate the public with misinformation and conspiracy theories has been far too successful. We've all read reports of the percentage of the American and British population who believe things we know to be fanciful such as that COVID was a hoax. The pernicious and widespread effect of this toxic rumor mongering via social media includes fanning climate change denial, and equally worrying, spreading the message, apparently believed by one in seven British people and one in

five Americans, that violence is a fair response to these government conspiracies.

These days, investigative journalism is underfunded and media control is in too few hands. In many countries, journalists fear for their lives when they report on politically contentious issues. Even in the heart of Europe it is possible for journalists to be murdered in cold blood. Journalism is further undermined when important stories, such as those about the climate crisis, simply don't run because they are blocked by editors—it's too risky, too downbeat, or too offensive to powerful patrons.

At Carnegie we have a program called Bridging the Gap through which we fund the policy-relevant work of academics in an effort to ensure that public policy will be informed by the best academic work available. We're also supporting efforts to encourage American universities to follow their British counterparts by incorporating public impact into criteria for academic promotion, and to move away from the view still widely held in the social sciences that applied work is somehow less worthy.

I would love to see universities step up and help supply the gap in the digital newsstands with reliable, fact-based long- and short-form takes on subjects of public importance. We need to get better at communicating our research on climate, on science and new technologies to a wider public readership, not just in journal articles, but in accessible digests and thought pieces. It goes without saying that to be credible, this has to be objective and evidence-based. You can imagine funded research fellowships and partnerships with trusted journalists where evidence is properly peer reviewed, for example.

Universities have been in the habit of using their communications teams largely to disseminate information about their own achievements: prizes won, goals met, gifts received, buildings opened. Nothing wrong with that, of course. But what if we regarded our media potential differently and became, instead of self advertisers, trusted advisors whose readers turned to them for weekly information without a party political agenda or audience numbers to keep up.

We can become staunch bastions of truth holding the eroding line of balance and accountability, preventing the flood of misinformation from overwhelming the digital commons.

WWW • Watch the full lecture on the Weatherhead Center YouTube channel: youtube.com/@HarvardWCFA

Photos Fall 2023 Events



Weatherhead affiliates gathered on August 28 and 29 for our 2023–2024 orientation that started with introductions, followed by informative panels by library professionals, staff, and faculty, and concluded with a BBQ for all affiliates and their families. Credit (left to right): Bethany Versoy, Lauren McLaughlin, and Bethany Versoy



The Weatherhead Forum titled “Militants to Peacemakers: A Conversation from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Lebanon” was held on September 20 and sponsored by the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Identity Politics. It featured Assaad Chaftari, Dženana Šabić Hamidović, Spasoje Kulaga, and Luciano Kaluza, and was chaired by Center Director Melani Cammett. Credit: Lauren McLaughlin



On December 4, the first in a Weatherhead Forum series titled “The War in Israel/Palestine, Part I: A Primer” was held online. It featured speakers Derek Penslar, Yael Berda, and Amahl Bishara, and was chaired by Center Director Melani Cammett. Credit: Lauren McLaughlin



Comedian Alingon Mitra (third from left) met the members of the Harvard College Stand-Up Comic Society after the Center's seventh annual International Comedy Night on October 3, held at the Smith Center during Harvard's Worldwide Week. Credit: Lauren McLaughlin



On September 22 and 23, the conference Decolonization's Discontents: Dissent and Opposition in the Aftermath of Independence was held and convened by Faculty Associate Erez Manela. Credit: Sarah Banse



On November 15, the Weatherhead Spotlight featured the Graduate Student Associates with a theme titled "Educating for an Uncertain Future." It featured Elena Ayala-Hurtado, Julia Smith Coyoli, Jingyun Dai, and Orelia Jonathan, and was chaired by Graduate Student Programs Director Erez Manela. Credit: Lauren McLaughlin



On November 1, the Weatherhead Spotlight featured the Research Cluster on Business and Government. Cluster Chair and Faculty Associate Meg Elizabeth Rithmire gave a talk titled "Precarious Ties: Business and the State in Authoritarian Asia." Credit: Lauren McLaughlin



Student Programs Coordinator Clare Putnam greeted students interested in traveling abroad for their studies at the Harvard International Opportunities Fair held on September 28. Credit: Lauren McLaughlin



Dispatches

Undergraduate Researchers in the Field

Every spring, a select group of Harvard College students receive travel grants from Weatherhead to support their thesis field research on topics related to international affairs. We selected exceptional undergraduates whose research we will support financially as well as in other ways, from helping revise research methods to planning projects that don't require travel. The Center has encouraged these Undergraduate Associates to take advantage of its research community by connecting with graduate students, faculty, postdocs, and visiting scholars. Four Undergraduate Associates write of their experiences last summer:



LAURA CONNOR

Committee on Degrees in Social Studies, Harvard College.
International history; politics of international development; US foreign relations; US-Latin America relations; democracy promotion; and political regimes and parties.

In 2006, Evo Morales became president of Bolivia after several years of contentious relations between the US government and Morales's then-expanding political party, the MAS (Movement for Socialism). Morales held a personal animosity toward the US government: he was a coca grower union leader in the region where the US focused its coca eradication programs during the War on Drugs. He kicked out the US ambassador and the Drug Enforcement Administration in 2008, five years prior to expelling the US Agency for International Development (USAID) from Bolivia.

I wondered why Morales disagreed with USAID programs—which were largely focused on “democracy promotion”—and why he waited until 2013 to make this decision. I traveled to La Paz, Bolivia for five weeks and spoke primarily with local historians, economists, and political analysts to better understand the political landscape and economy in Bolivia, the country's historical relations with the US (which is often referred to as *el imperio*, “the empire”), and Evo Morales as a political figure and MAS leader.

As global threats to democratic values escalate around the world, I hope to contribute to larger discussions about the US role in the world order, whether international aid can encourage democratic forms of governance, and how democracy promotion interacts with other US foreign policy objectives. Bolivia is my case study due to its “anti-imperialist” rejection of US aid. I wanted to understand how USAID's democracy promotion objective

fared as the relationship with the US deteriorated and why the overall US diplomatic mission in Bolivia ultimately failed.

I faced a few challenges during my travels—primarily keeping pace with rapid-fire Spanish and finding Bolivian politicians willing to speak openly with me in such a tense current political climate. With those small barriers in mind, every interviewee was eager to help me in any way possible. Whether they put me in touch with additional relevant contacts, sent me reading materials, or escorted me to the bus stop after an interview, their kindness and generosity was remarkable, even when I provided little in return. I shared the most memorable conversations over cups of coffee at local cafes, often extending well beyond our scheduled time. It was rewarding to feel a part of a greater community of scholars and researchers.

While this was my first real solo trip abroad and I was nervous, I was fortunate to live with a Harvard student's family whom I had not met before. To welcome me, the mother, Sandra, had prepared the traditional *plato paceño*—meat, potatoes, lima beans, corn, and fried cheese—and everyone had a glass of Bolivian beer.

The family fired questions at me and my jet-lagged mind struggled to keep up. *Plato paceño*, they explained, dated from 1781 when there was a food shortage in La Paz after the Aymara launched a siege on the city to oust the occupying Spanish conquistadors.

A few weeks later, Sandra's sister invited friends and family to a bonfire. Bundled up for a Bolivian winter night, we drank *té con té*, a hot cocktail made with black tea, cinnamon, lime, sugar and *singani*, the Bolivian national liquor. We listened to Bolivian music, roasted marshmallows and danced, warmed by the drinks and the dancing.

These experiences taught me much about Bolivian history, culture, and family life, and enriched my research more than I could have imagined. Ultimately my research was successful, and many meaningful memories and life lessons came from living with my host family. I am truly grateful for all I learned during my time in Bolivia.



DINA KOBEISSI

Departments of Government and of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard College. *Modern Middle East and North Africa; public policy; human rights; international*

relations; political communication and media; and Arab diaspora studies.

The history of international influence in Syria is complex and multifaceted, shaped by geopolitical interests, regional conflicts, and internal developments. Certain countries, notably the United States, have a longstanding history of imposing sanctions on Syria dating back to the late 1970s. The intensity of these measures increased in 2011 when Syria descended into conflict; the country was met with the introduction of more comprehensive sanctions from the United States as well as other entities like the European Union and Arab League. The aim of the sanctions is to compel the regime to engage in negotiations and to address a range of allegations related to weapons use, political oppression, and human rights.

This summer, I sought to learn more about sanctions on Syria and hoped to gain a better understanding of two main areas. Firstly, I wanted to understand what countries like the United States sought, and continue to seek, with sanctions. What brought the foreign policy tool to be implemented and what are the goals of those imposing it? Secondly, I wanted to understand how different sectors—such as healthcare, business, oil





and gas, and humanitarian aid—have been impacted by sanctions, both directly and indirectly. This was challenging because changes in access to different goods and an absence of a well-functioning economy can be attributed to the state of war Syria had found itself in following 2011; I wanted to know how sanctions specifically changed the behavior of businessmen, pharmacists, and government officials. How did people adapt to life under sanctions from major world powers and some of their biggest trading partners? Overall, I wanted to explore the unintended effects of sanctions, and how those effects play a role in shaping the country.

To explore purpose, I reviewed sanction guidelines and policies, alongside conducting interviews with individuals who have expertise in or have been involved in shaping those policies. To understand the impact of sanctions, I conducted several interviews with Syrians who experienced sanctions on the ground, many of whom expressed their frustration with the economic restrictions and the everyday impact they feel as a result. When I interviewed a young man, he told me, “In Syria, we have nothing and everything,” explaining how essentially, if you are connected enough, and if you can afford it, you can circumvent the sanctions and obtain anything from the medication you desperately

need to the newest iPhone. I also spoke with professors experienced in Syria’s wartime economy, and humanitarian organization leaders who shed light on the impact of sanctions for the most vulnerable. Their guidance was particularly valuable in pointing me to existing research related to my topic.

From speaking with various individuals, I gleaned answers to my questions from different perspectives—from those whose entire international companies were forced to close their Damascus doors, to pharmaceutical industry figures who had their supply chains cut, to normal citizens who found themselves needing a VPN for their social media accounts. From professors and academics, I learned how the regime actively sought to mitigate negative impact to their power and how broader foreign relations with countries like Russia and Iran were exacerbated.

Ultimately, the interviews I conducted allowed me to better understand how sanctions are playing out in Syria: how sanctions not only fall short of their intended goals, but also have varying impacts on different segments of the population. In my senior thesis, I hope to focus on an area of study that has not been thoroughly explored, the impact of sanctions on inequality. I believe understanding such impacts can contribute to the larger discussion on sanctions, potentially influencing future decision making surrounding their deployment.



GARRETT O'BRIEN

Committee on Degrees in Social Studies, Harvard College. *China-Africa relations; development studies; postcolonial theory; semiotics; and South-South relations.*

Upon arrival in Kigali, I was told that the country was twenty-nine years old. This idea initially shocked me. How could a country with a history reaching back to before the Bantu Migration be only twenty-nine years old?

It quickly became clear that the Rwanda that I was living in was in fact that young. The country experienced a rebirth from the ashes of destruction after the 1994 Rwandan genocide of the Tutsis, where up to one million Tutsi, Twa, and moderate Hutu people were killed. After the genocide, the Rwandan government had to reconstruct the value of the Rwandan life. To do this, the government pursued the country’s then-current development trajectory and transformed the country from a place of absolute carnage—a place where neighbors and family members murdered each other in

the street and the value of life was unrecognizable—to a place that has been globally recognized for its success in economic development.

To overcome the position that the country found itself in, the government established a series of fundamental principles that would guide Rwanda's development path. *Agaciro*, one of the most salient of these principles, is an untranslatable Kinyarwanda word that roughly means self-worth, dignity, and pride. This principle has clearly influenced the development strategy of the country and has underscored the importance of self-reliance and agency in Rwanda's economic and human development.



The two main goals of my research this summer were to better understand the Rwandan development mission and vision and to learn more about how Chinese investment plays a role in the future of Rwanda. To accomplish these goals, I conducted twenty-five interviews with government officials who had firsthand knowledge of Chinese investment in Rwanda and discussed topics of development, modernity, South-South partnership, and agency.

I based my research out of the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), the government agency in charge of realizing the Rwandan development vision and managing foreign direct investment flowing into the country. I connected regularly with RDB analysts who work on the front lines of Rwanda's economic development and planning as well as prospective investors who were interested in investing in Rwanda. Using RDB as a home base allowed me to make connections across

the Rwandan government such as the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the National Bank of Rwanda.

Upon reflection on my time in Rwanda, I feel as though I have a thorough understanding of the goals and contexts for Rwanda's economic development and how Chinese investment plays into this story. I found in my interviews that individuals involved in development strategy within the Rwandan government are extremely cognizant of the risk of dependency on Chinese investors and have gone to great lengths to ensure that Rwanda does not find itself in a similar situation to its neighbors regarding over-reliance on Chinese public and private investment.

That said, Rwanda wants to learn from China when it comes to poverty reduction and manufacturing—but knows that the way forward must be informed by its history and its cultural context. The economic development of the country must continue to be uniquely Rwandan, no matter how important its Chinese partners become.



CLAIRE YOO

Departments of History and Literature and of Art, Film, and Visual Studies, Harvard College.
Twentieth-century US history and literature; race and ethnic studies; incarceration; migration;

decolonization; nostalgia; child labor/rights; gender and sexuality; and media studies.

On a gloomy Monday morning in August, I found myself literally counting sheep: the train route from London to Edinburgh crosses through hundreds of miles of British countryside, littered with grazing animals. Though seemingly random, this sleepy trip felt quite on brand for my summer of conducting archival research in Utah, California, and England.

My thesis is on Japanese American Girl Scouts in World War II incarceration camps in the United States, and it argues that this historical moment represented the transformation of an American childhood leisure activity into a performative labor of citizenship. Operating within a historical gap at the intersection of two highly censored histories, my thesis examines the US government's PR campaign to affirm principles of democracy within its deeply unconstitutional incarceration program—which included implementing Girl Scout troops in all ten camps.

At first glance, this topic appears totally unrelated to England, let alone Scotland. But my thesis dives into the

WWI origins of the American Girl Scouts, an organization based on the British Girl Guides, founded just two years prior. Thus, after a very fruitful month of research in Utah and California on Japanese incarceration camps and local Girl Scout troops, I was in England doing research on Girlguiding history.

On my first day at the Girlguiding UK headquarters, however, I was informed that the national Girlguiding Archive had actually been closed for ten years (when their prior archivist passed away). No one had filled the position since. Undeterred, I decided to manufacture my own luck: throughout July, I talked with regional Girlguiding archivists, studied original handbooks at the British Library, and planned trips to historical centers (emphasis on “planned,” as some trips fell through the gaps between outdated websites and defunct emails).

Then in August, I received a very peculiar opportunity to go to Scotland.

After months of emails into the void, the Girlguiding Scotland Archive finally responded to inform me that while it would be impossible for me to physically access their archive, there was an archivist I could come up and speak to. I was tugging at this thread of Scottish Girlguiding history purely for fun: the Scottish organization separated from the broader English Girlguiding organization in 1933, right between the two world wars, and I was curious as to what interwar changes caused this sudden split. Optimistically, it would provide insight into the greater effects of the world wars



on the British organization. Realistically, it would make a very interesting footnote.

It ended up being a dead end: the Scottish organization split simply because there were so many Girl Guides that they logistically needed to have their own office in Edinburgh.

But I felt that the five-hour train ride each way was worth it, because the best parts of my summer were meetings like these. I loved having conversations with random people with shared curiosities tucked away in these niche histories, conversations that would usually become more casual and personal as they meandered on. You can write a thesis from anywhere (though obviously it's nice to write your thesis with a view of Westminster Abbey). But the in-person experience of meeting with an archivist and visiting a site is truly incomparable: how could I explain the feeling of stepping on the same cracked desert soil that just eighty years prior Japanese Americans had built communities on when they were incarcerated by their own government?

Sometimes, counting sheep can lead you to places beyond your wildest dreams.



Page 14: Claire Yoo in the Sierra Nevada mountains of Lone Pine, California, twelve miles away from Manzanar Historic Site. Used with permission by Claire Yoo

Page 16: Laura Connor and her host family in front of a waterfall outside of Coroico, Bolivia in the Yungas region. Used with permission by Laura Connor

Page 17: The iShop store in Damascus, Syria offers Apple products despite the sanctions. Credit: Dina Kobeissi

Page 18: Garrett O'Brien outside the Rwanda Development Board office in Kigali, Rwanda. Used with permission by Garrett O'Brien

This page: Sleepy sheep in the Scottish countryside; Manzanar Cemetery memorial at Manzanar Historic Site. Credit: Claire Yoo



Weatherhead

Research Groups

Weatherhead Research Cluster on Identity Politics

This fall, the Weatherhead Research Cluster on Identity Politics launched with a series of invigorating and thought-provoking events. Chaired by Center Director Melani Cammett, the cluster aims to explore ways to improve intergroup relations in postconflict countries by bringing together a multigenerational cohort of Harvard and global scholars and practitioners. Cammett hopes to create a vibrant intellectual community centered around the topic of ethnic and religious politics and conflict, and thus far, it has been.

The cluster recently granted ten graduate students research funding to provide a forum in which the students could workshop upcoming academic work. This twice-per-semester workshop allows students to join cluster affiliates and colleagues across departments to share their published and in-progress work. At the first workshop on October 3 of this year, graduate student Hansong Li joined cluster affiliates Feyaad Allie and Engy Said, and each shared their current research. The discussants presented on a variety of topics from marginalized minorities rising in power in India to analyzing intercommunal relations through the intercultural dimensions of “love literature” to state-citizen relations, using Lebanon as a case.

Later that week, on October 5 and 6, the cluster hosted its inaugural annual conference on “Intergroup Relations after Violent Conflict: Insights from Research and Practice.” The conference brought together nearly thirty influential scholars and practitioners who design, study, and/or implement interventions to improve intergroup relations after violent conflict. The two days were filled with lively intellectual discussions and collaboration centered around varying levels of analysis, ranging from the micro-level contact theory to macro-level discussions of the impactful role of social actors.

Additionally, the cluster cosponsored two Weatherhead events, “*Militants to Peacemakers: A Conversation from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Lebanon*,” where Cammett moderated conversations with veterans from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Lebanon who have dedicated themselves to peacebuilding in their regions after ethnic conflict, and “*Peacebuilding: A Matter of Trust (and the Benefits of a Bowl of Soup)*,” a special event featuring Peter Sheridan, who reflected on the importance of building trust after violent conflict.

The inaugural semester of the cluster wrapped up with a special lecture on November 7 delivered by Professor Ben Kaplan of University College London, discussing freedom of conscience in early modern Europe and the second student workshop on November 28, featuring graduate students Nate Grau, Mitsuru Mukaigawara, and Cat O’Donnell.

This is just the beginning, as Cammett hopes to construct and maintain a global scholars network of key players in a variety of disciplines to conceptualize the rise and potential decline of extreme identity politics in various milieus.



WWW • Stay in touch by visiting the identity politics research cluster website where you can subscribe to our newsletter at: sites.harvard.edu/wrc22-identity-politics

Opposite: On October 4, the cluster sponsored a special event with Peter Sheridan (right), Chief Executive of Co-operation Ireland with a talk titled “Peacebuilding: A Matter of Trust (and the Benefits of a Bowl of Soup)” followed by a conversation with Center Director Melani Cammett. Credit: Bethany Versoy

Above: The cluster hosted its inaugural annual conference titled “Intergroup Relations after Violent Conflict: Insights from Research and Practice” on October 5 and 6. Credit: Maximillian Calleo

Canada Program

This fall, the Canada Program turned its attention to one of the thorniest issues in policy studies—the reform of health care—by launching a seminar series on Healthy Comparisons. Over the course of seven weeks, with nine guest speakers, the series examined health care systems in Canada and the United States. The series was also part of the core curriculum for GOV 2114, “The Politics of Health Care,” offered by the current William Lyon Mackenzie King Visiting Professor, Antonia Maioni from McGill University.

The challenges to health care are many, on both sides of the border, from access to coverage to financing. Even though Canada and the US have different health care systems, persistent problems exist in both countries. For Canada’s single-payer system, equitable access to care is still evident, as are gaps in coverage such as pharmacare. In the US, the complexity of health care systems, coupled with phenomenal costs, make this issue one of the most salient on the political agenda.

The series began by asking whether social values could explain differences between Canadians and Americans. Michael Adams, founder of the Environics polling firm, reviewed public opinion trends over the past generation to demonstrate that, while we tend to be alike in many respects, political polarization, race, and gender provide much sharper points of divergence in the US than in Canada. This suggests a different social environment for solidarity and the kinds of values that could support a commitment to publicly funded health care.

The series also turned to the expertise of health care practitioners themselves to ask how their experiences can shed light on cross-national differences. Drs. Marion Dove (McGill) and Aaron Hoffman (Harvard) were asked which country offered better access to primary care. While the answer was “it depends,” their conversation did reveal important nuances—how Canada’s “universalist”



Left to right: Daniel Manulak, Helen Clayton, and Antonia Maioni of the Canada Program. Credit: Bethany Versoy

system ensures health insurance access without regard to the ability to pay, while in the US, the labyrinth of coverage and costs has led to a “bimodal” reality in terms of access to care and health outcomes. In a further cross-national conversation, Tim Evans (McGill) and Lisa Berkman (Harvard) revealed how these differences had a stark impact on responses to COVID-19 and the different health outcomes across the Canada-US border.

Jane Philpott—a former minister of health in the Government of Canada—argued that Canada needs to build more capacity in the health care workforce, especially in family medicine and primary care. And, she insisted, political vision and leadership are necessary for real change to occur. But how? Alike Lafontaine, past president of the Canadian Medical Association and an advocate in Indigenous health, revealed that an essential problem in all health care systems is falling back on “mental models” that are entrenched as solutions, even though this leads to higher costs and lower efficiencies. And Laurent Duvernay-Tardif, a former NFL Super Bowl champion and medical resident, echoed this sentiment, as well as revealing how the reality of health professionals in the system can be just as challenging as the pressure of facing the game on the football field.

The last words of the series came from political scientist and renowned health care expert Ted Marmor (Yale). Marmor reminded us that there are many misconceptions about Canada’s health care system in the US, but a careful comparative analysis of political institutions and interests can illuminate why countries differ in their approach to health care and contribute to meaningful health reform.

WWW • Learn more about the Canada Program by visiting the website canada.wcfia.harvard.edu

Student Programs



2023-2024 KENNETH I. JUSTER FELLOWS

The Weatherhead Center is pleased to announce its 2023-2024 class of Juster Fellows. Now in its thirteenth year, this grant initiative is made possible by the generosity of the Honorable Kenneth I. Juster, Harvard and Weatherhead Center alum, member of the Center's Advisory Committee, and former United States Ambassador to India. Juster has devoted much of his education, professional activities, public service, and nonprofit endeavors to international affairs, and is deeply engaged in promoting international understanding and advancing international relations. Juster grants support undergraduates whose projects may be related to thesis research but may have broader experiential components as well. The newly named Juster Fellows—all of whom will be undertaking their international experiences this winter or spring—are:

Jay Hong Chew '25 (Economics and Government) will travel to Rwanda to explore the diplomacy, conduct, and policies of smaller states in East Africa as they relate to great power influence in the continent.

Charlotte Grace Duesing '25 (Organismic & Evolutionary Biology) will travel to Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines to investigate the socio-political, cultural, and economic roles and management of coastal ecosystems in Southeast Asia.

Justin Hu '24 (Romance Languages & Literatures and History) will travel to Martinique to research the country's Lycee Schoelcher-educated anticolonial luminary, Aime Cesaire.

Jacky Huang '25 (East Asian Studies and Sociology) will travel to China to research the state of US-China tech relations, specifically on the impact of American technology trade policies on Chinese companies in technology sectors.

Isabelle Grace King '25 (Government) will travel to France and Senegal to analyze the impact of French-led military operations in the Sahel region on the level of violence due to local intolerance of the occupying force.

Tomoki Matsuno '25 (Environmental Science & Public Policy) will travel to Australia to conduct a study that delves into regional disparities in green energy access.

Alexandra Margarita Purcell '24 (Environmental Science & Public Policy) will travel to the Pilcomayo River Basin in Bolivia to study water pollution as it impacts the health and well-being of local communities and the environment.

Shane Michael Rice '25 (Anthropology) will travel to Samarkand, Uzbekistan to examine how memory, identity, heritage, and values are promoted or suppressed in post-Soviet Central Asia.

Jolly Rop '24 (Government) will travel to Kenya to assess the effect automation had on the social and political attitudes of tea pickers who were displaced by a machine and those currently employed.

Aidan Walker Wrenn-Walz '24 (Government) will travel to Rome to assess whether the consumption of political misinformation has contributed to lower levels of democratic engagement in Italy.

WWW • Learn more about our student programs by visiting the website wcfa.harvard.edu/students

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