

SUMMER 2020 VOL. 1

THE SEMINARIAN

ALUMNI EDITION

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WHAT'S NEW

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

PHOTOS THROUGH THE YEARS



Oxford Summer Seminar
UMass Amherst - Trinity College



The Seminarian

Vol 54, Issue I

Alumni Edition

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This Seminarian at a glance:

What's New

Alumni Month

July 2020 marked Alumni Month for the Oxford Summer Seminar! We recap the month and how you can remain involved as an Oxford Summer Seminar Alumni!

A Virtual High Table Lecture

Oxford: The Plague Years

To celebrate the end of Alumni Month, Dr. Andrew Beaumont, beloved OSS tutor, gave a topical lecture via zoom for almost 100 Alumni. The event was fun and informative for all who participated!

Alumni Spotlight

Memories from Alumni

All summer long, Alumni have been sharing their stories! Read about Peter Goodman (1966), Hugh Reid (1970), Laura Plummer (1984, 85, 86, 87) and Andrew Richmond's (2008) time in Oxford.

What's New for the Oxford Summer Seminar

The Oxford Summer Seminar began with the intention of introducing a wide range of US Students to the very best of Oxford University's academic and social traditions. These goals continue to guide the seminar today. Though the Oxford Summer Seminar did not run for its 54th summer, the seminar's Alumni continued to keep the spirit of the program alive. A celebration of the Oxford Summer Seminar occurred within the Alumni Facebook group during July of 2020. Each day, Alumni posted photos and reminisced about their time in the City of Dreaming Spires.



The Alumni Seminarian

On Sunday evenings while the Oxford Summer Seminar is operating, Junior Deans publish a newsletter to inform students of the upcoming week's activities. While there have unfortunately been no weekly activities for the batch of "would be" Seminarian's, this Alumni Seminarian will serve as a memento of the 2020 Seminar. Inside, we will continue to celebrate the legacy of our dear program by the continuation of shared memories from alumni as well as a look at what has been done to commemorate the Oxford Summer Seminar 2020.

If you are not already a member of our Alumni group, please join us to keep up to date with current happenings of the Oxford Summer Seminar as well as keep in touch with and get to know other Alumni!

facebook.com/groups/UmassOxfordAlumni



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Dr. Beaumont's Virtual High Table- "Oxford: The Plague Years"

"Once a week, a guest lecturer addresses the members of the seminar and, in the Oxford tradition, a High Table is prepared to which students are invited." Due to the unfortunate circumstances of the current pandemic, an in person High Table Lecture and Dinner were not able to take place in the Trinity Hall. However, that did not halt our summer traditions.

To wrap up Alumni Month in the Oxford Summer Seminar Facebook group, Katy Manz (student 2005, staff 2006 & 2007) and Dr. Andrew Beaumont came up with the idea of a virtual High Table Lecture. As High Table Dinner would traditionally take place on Tuesday nights, Dr. Beaumont gave his High Table lecture on the last Tuesday of July. Thus, on July 28, 2020, over 95 Alumni gathered for this virtual celebration.

Since 2007, Dr. Beaumont has made the Oxford Summer Seminar so memorable for so many seminarians. He teaches "British Perspectives on the American Revolution," a course he tag lined "Your history, Our way."



Dr. Beaumont has taught under four seminar directors and is very beloved among all seminar students.

The event began with a welcome from the Outgoing Program Director, Jason Moralee, who acknowledged the past and present Oxford Summer Seminar staff. Victoria DiSalvo (Student 2018, staff 2019 & 2020) welcomed the alumni, thanked Hofer Endowment Donors, and gave a toast to the Oxford Summer Seminar Legacy. Lastly, Jenny Adams (Program Director 2007-2009 & 2016-2018) introduced Dr. Beaumont ahead of his talk.

Dr. Beaumont's talk, titled "Oxford: The Plague Years," was highly relevant, insightful, and humorous. His delivery and charm rejuvenated a candid excitement surrounding the program's most beloved tradition.



The Oxford Summer Seminar Staff would like to extend our gratitude to Andrew Beaumont, Katy Manz, and Jenny Adams for helping put on this special event! As well as a thank you to all of the Alumni who celebrated the legacy of our program with us that night.



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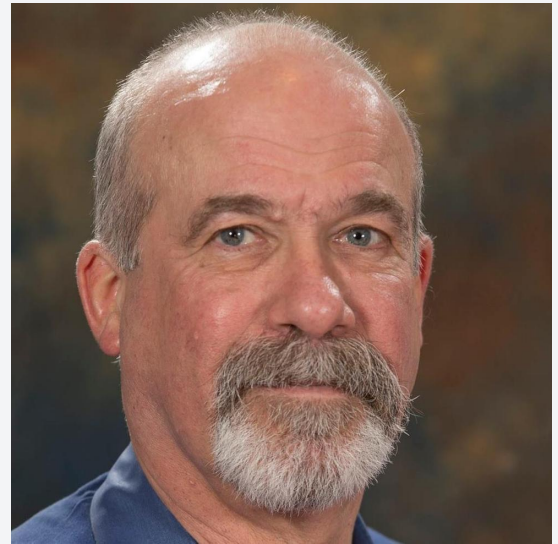
Alumni Spotlight

Peter Goodman, 1966

The first Oxford Summer Seminar ran during the summer of 1966. This program would become the first Anglo- American Summer program at Oxford University. Peter Goodman attended what he describes as "[Ernest] Hofer's Big Experiment" that summer. During its trial run, the Oxford Summer Seminar students were not housed at Trinity College, as we have been for the past 50 years, but rather lived at St. Hilda's College which is located across the Cherwell.

During his time at Oxford, Peter studied Elizabethan Playwrights and English Poetry. To supplement his tutorials, Peter visited the "Valley of the White Horse, where [he] watched a student performance of Beckett's *'Krapp's Last Tape,'* in an estate's theater." Peter also took the opportunity to visit Stratford-upon-Avon, Blenheim Palace, Luton Hoo, and Winchester- King Alfred's capital. All places that Seminar Students might still enjoy!

While reminiscing about his time in the City of Dreaming Spires, Peter remembered learning how to play darts.



He also enjoyed some of the local cuisine by drinking real beer and lemonade shandies. Peter reminisced about eating steak and kidney pies, and not to mention fish and chips in greasy newspaper cones.

After the program ended, Peter's travels did not end. He took a canal boat back to Winchester and worked at the dig with Duke University students for two weeks (they had found St. Swithin's tomb!).

Peter has carried many fond memories of his summer in Oxford with him for the duration of his life. He married 43 years ago to his wife Debbie, with whom he has two sons. Peter is now an Associate Professor at the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.



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Alumni Spotlight

Hugh Reid, 1970

Hugh Reid attended the Oxford Summer Seminar during the Summer of 1970. Along with the affection Hugh holds for his experience as a whole, he cherishes the countless fond memories of Oxford and his peers. Hugh took much away from his time as a Seminarian. He even recollected about learning the "old" system of pounds shillings and pence which proved useful later in life when he went on to do research on the 18th century. Currently, Hugh works in the Department of English Language and Literature at Carleton University.

Much has changed in the 50 years since Hugh attended the Oxford Summer Seminar. The Covered market for example which now is filled with tourist shops and take-away restaurants was "filled with small used books shops, mere stalls really, tea shops, butchers, fishmongers, etc., a 'real' market" in 1970.

One particular memory sticks out for Hugh while participating in the pub culture of Oxford. "There was one slightly unusual moment in the White Horse. I was sitting with a fellow student when he pointed out an old man sitting by himself in a raised back corner of the pub (the White Horse



has since been renovated). 'That's Tolkien,' he said. I looked again. He seemed to be a bit tired, but happily waiting for someone. I knew who Tolkien was, although I suspect that I was the only person my age who hadn't yet read *The Lord of the Rings*. Of course, we wouldn't have dreamed of going over to him and left before any companion of his arrived. The next day I went into Blackwell's and bought *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*."

After returning home from Oxford, Hugh wrote a piece about playing basketball in Oxford and sent it to the then president of Trinity. The College Archivist also kept a copy of the piece in the Trinity archives and Hugh's story can be read in full on the following page...



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A Summer Memory from 1970

I was a participant in the seminar in 1970 and can relate an incident which may be of the more uncommon kind of reminiscence, but which may also reflect the affection which seminar participants feel for their involvement in the program. During that summer it didn't take long for many of the scouts, as would be expected, to get to know us on a more personal level, and so a number of them knew that I, and some others, played university basketball. At some point during the summer, a short 2 week course took place at Balliol and enrolled there, too, were apparently some who considered themselves good basketball players. The Trinity scouts approached a few of us and asked if we would play a pick-up game against those from Balliol. We thought it a good idea and so agreed, not realizing the importance of any Trinity/Balliol contest.

Some arrangements were made and subsequently, one afternoon, we made our way out to Iffley, to the gymnasium. I assume we all had running shoes of some sort and, if memory serves, we were issued Trinity singlets to wear. From somewhere a referee appeared. A few of 'our' scouts, whom we recognized, were there, and we assumed that some of the other spectators were Balliol scouts. In the end the Trinity scouts were more than pleased with our rather easy victory. That evening at supper most of the scouts and those serving came by to congratulate us. 'Well done,' they would say, or, 'Good work'. The more enthusiastic spoke of upholding Trinity's honour. It seemed that no matter how small the contest, and even if it involved summer students, a Trinity victory over Balliol was significant. I did suspect at the time that there may have been some wagering on the game, although such a thing was never mentioned or even hinted at. A few days later some of the scouts invited us out for an evening and took us to the Headington Labour club where they spoke, again, of our victory over Balliol. It was with very glad hearts and a sense of pride (all enlarged after a few pints) that we rode the bus down Headington Hill back to Trinity, feeling that, somehow, we had been part of preserving the College's honour.

There was, though, a slightly uncomfortable ending to the story. Those were the days before university t-shirts or sweatshirts were purchased and worn by anyone. So we, the players, feeling this distinct sense of pride in Trinity did what we thought was the next best thing. We crossed the Broad and entered a small shop and purchased Trinity ties. Of course, we did not really appreciate the important connection between an individual and a body, such as a college, that the tie represented. After all, many people in North America wore clothing from a different university than their own. So that evening we proudly wore our ties to dinner. The college bursar, a nice man who always seemed rather quiet and a bit earnest, told us politely, but firmly, that we really shouldn't wear the ties. And we never did again, although in our hearts, we still felt that we had played a role, albeit a very minor, even a negligible one, in maintaining the honour of Trinity College, our more than mere summer alma mater.

-Hugh Reid



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Alumni Spotlight

Laura Plummer, 1984, 85, 86, 87

Laura Plummer's first Oxford Summer was in 1984. As a student she took David Fairer's course titled From Satire to Romanticism, Jenny Newman's course titled Twentieth Century Women Novelists, and Shakespeare at Stratford which took weekly trips to the theater!

"I remember how amazing it was to go to the Bodleian Library with David and see the 11th edition of Blake's *Book of Thel*, hand illustrated (with engravings) by Blake, with obvious places where he'd rubbed out lines and redrawn them. David also took us to Stourhead for a day trip to visit the 18th-c gardens there (because of its connection to Alexander Pope) and on the bus on the way home, he composed a limerick for each student."

Laura returned to Oxford three more times, in 1985, 1986, and 1987 as a part of the program staff.

She was able to audit Jenny Newman's course (again) and Peter Levi's poetry course, as well as attend the field trips for the course in



art history with Nigel McGilchrist.

Laura described what sounds like a magical evening as her favorite memory: "Ernest Hofer treating the entire staff to dinner in London followed by *Les Misérables* with the original cast at the Palace Theater; our 5th-row seats were amazing, and I still marvel at having had that experience, but I have no pictures."

Presently, Laura runs the Scholarly Writing Program at Indiana University where she also received her PhD in English Literature. The Oxford Summer Seminar may have shaped Laura's life path as it not only "confirmed [her] literary nerd-dom" but Ernest Hofer, our founder, also encouraged her to apply to graduate level programs.



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Alumni Spotlight

Andrew Richmond, 2008

Andrew Richmond attended the Oxford Summer Seminar during the Summer of 2008 under the directorship of Jenny Adams.

"My time at Oxford shaped the course of my life (in friends, interests, and career) from that time on." Andrew took the Romance Literature Course and Oxford: The City as a Work of Art during his time in Oxford. His Romance Literature course had a particular impact, as he now works on Medieval Romances. Following receiving his BA in English from UMass Amherst, he went on to pursue an MPhil in Medieval and Renaissance Literature at the University of Cambridge, and his PhD in English (Medieval Literature) from the Ohio State University. Andrew is currently an assistant professor at Southern Connecticut State University.

Andrew stated that his entire summer in Oxford is a wonderful memory. "I recall sneaking onto the roof of my Staircase to watch the sun rise on 3 July; rescuing a bird in the gardens outside Corpus Christi College, and later listening to my friends' musical



performances there; a midnight race around the courtyard outside the Trinity chapel; and listening to a friend play Moonlight Sonata on the chapel piano on the last night of the program.

The many trips, both local and afar, were also quite memorable. In particular, my trips with friends to spend a weekend in York and to hike the cliffs at Dover will always stay with me, and Blenheim Palace was a wonder to explore during the full-program outing. There are, of course, many late nights at pubs strung through it all."

Across the board when speaking with Alumni, some of the most meaningful takeaways from the program are the people. For Andrew, the "friendships that [he] entered into there became some of the deepest of [his] life."



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High Table: Through the Years

1994, Karuna Ramona Sabnani



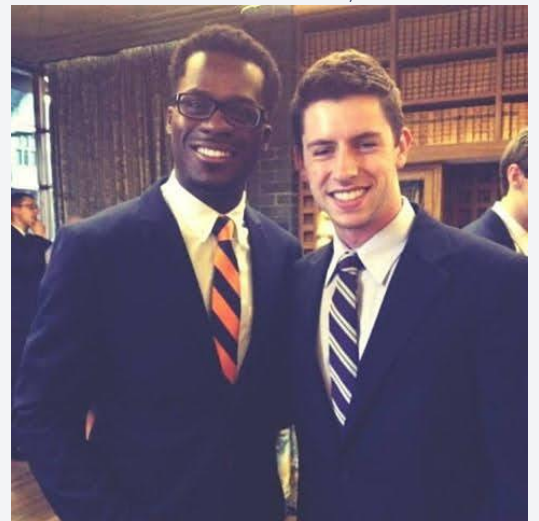
2014, Sarah Freudson



2014, Rahb Sims



1984, Laura Plummer



2001, Hannah McArdle



2019, Michael Turner



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Somewhere in Oxford...



1987, Scott Williams



2011, Bryan Ward



Unknown, Soccer Match



1986, John Scott



2017, Jake Adelman



1991, Ken Carriere



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Spotted around Trinity College



1984, Laura Plummer



2019, Victoria DiSalvo



2006, Katy Manz



2004, John Pollock



2016, Ellen Howes



1991, Ken Carriere



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The Ernest Hofer Scholarship Endowment

The Ernest Hofer Scholarship Endowment was created by Oxford Summer Seminar Alumni in honor of our program's founder Ernest Hofer. Money from this fund provides need-based and diversity scholarships to applicants.

Please consider donating to the Ernest Hofer Scholarship Endowment to help future Seminararians have access to our life changing program.

Thank you to all who have donated to the Ernest Hofer Scholarship Endowment in the past. Your generosity has helped keep the program accessible to countless Seminararians.

The Hofer Endowment can be accessed from our website **umass.edu/Oxford** and clicking on the "**Give**" tab at the top of the page.



Photograph: Margaret Melozzi



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"The Oxford Summer Seminar changed my life..."

Though there have been ample changes to the program overtime, one thing that almost all seminarians can agree on is that the Oxford Summer Seminar changed them for the better. In the words of our founder, Ernest Hofer, "... the Seminar has had some important effects. I used to warn everyone at our first dinner that 'these six weeks will change your life.' Often I would get a laugh; more often, at the end, I would have a handshake, and the simple three words 'You were right.'"

Here are just a couple of examples of how seminar students feel about the program:

"The UMass Seminar was something that I had been anticipating for quite some time. Not only did it come up to everything that I expected, it far surpassed it. This summer has been the most incredible summer of my life. I thought I knew myself until I came to Europe and discovered even more. I know it sounds cliché to say that the Seminar changed my life, but it has. This is something that every-one should have the opportunity to do. Undoubtedly, the Oxford Seminar has got to be one of the most valuable programs UMass offers."

-Marigold Pascual '97

"Oxford is a busy city, and it can be overbearing at times, but as soon as I enter the blue gates of Trinity, I come inside a haven of peace, with freshly cut grass, beautiful gardens, open spaces, and familiar faces. It certainly didn't take me long to be able to call Trinity my home. From the very beginning, I heard people raving about their tutors ... I remember thinking, what a wonderful collection of educators from all over Great Britain was assembled here for the purpose of this program."

-Ajay Soni '97



These testimonials were found in information packets from 1998, however the sentiment within them is timeless.



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**Thank you for your continued
love and support of the
Oxford Summer Seminar!**



Cheers to the 2020 Seminar!



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