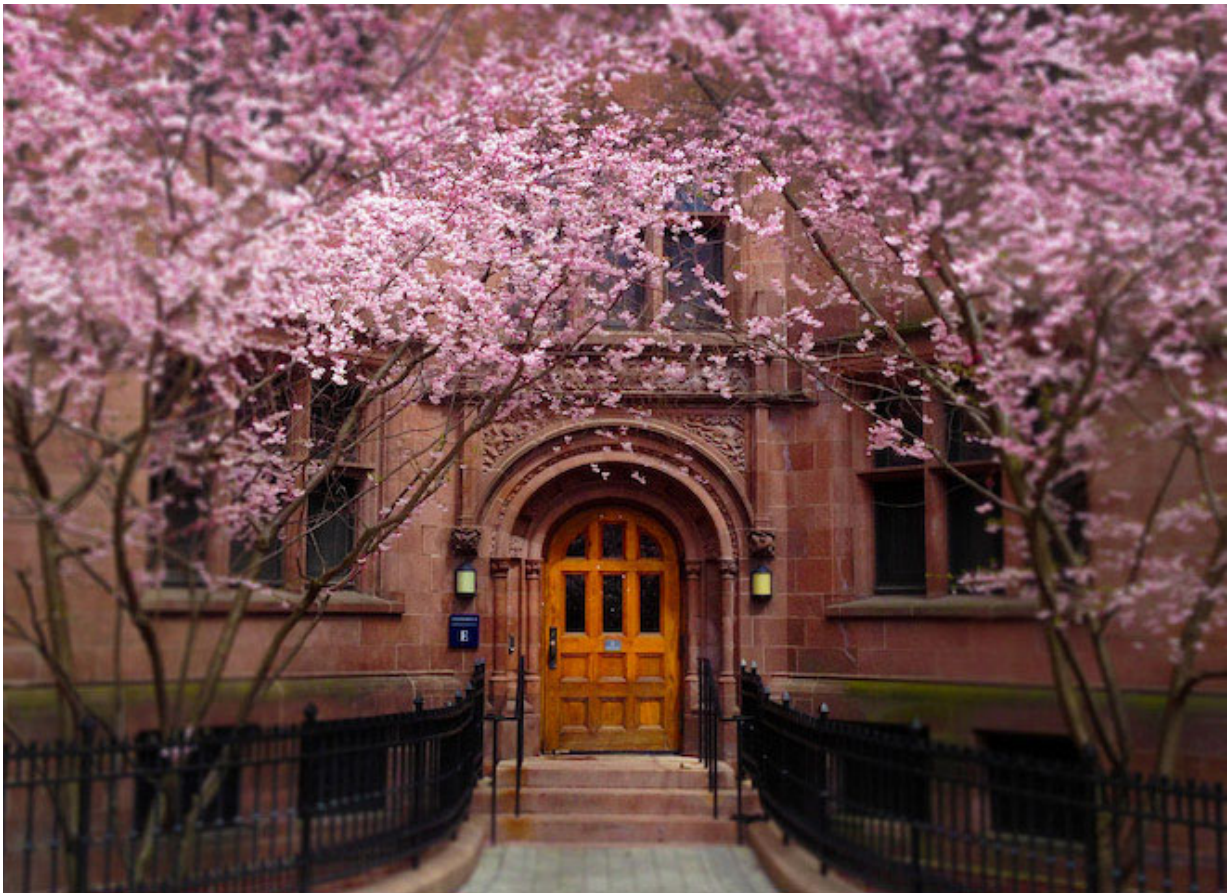


To view this email as a web page, go [here](#).

# Yale

## Yale Graduate School Alumni Newsletter

Spring 2021 in review



### A Message from Dean Cooley

May 6, 2021

Dear GSAS Alumni,

I am delighted to report that the Graduate School will host an in-person Commencement ceremony for December 2020 and May 2021 graduates on Sunday, May 23 pending public health guidance. President Salovey and I plan to confer degrees and congratulate the new graduates outdoors on Old Campus unless pandemic numbers or severe weather interfere. While we are unable to welcome guests as we have in the past, we are nonetheless grateful to be able to gather and celebrate the accomplishments of this year's graduating class.

If you can, take a little time to explore the videos posted for the annual Edward A. Bouchet and Where Do I Go From Yale? (WDIGFY) Conferences in April. Presiding Bishop Curry is an inspiration, and the WDIGFY keynotes were filled with helpful information for any new graduate or job-seeker. You'll find links in the articles below.

I hope you will join me on May 12 at noon ET for a conversation with Yale leaders in the humanities who head up fascinating multi-disciplinary programs that address some of the world's most challenging issues. You may have received an invitation, but if not, links and presentation details can be found below.

Thank you profoundly for the many ways you support our current students.

With best wishes,  
Lynn Cooley

Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences  
Vice Provost for Postdoctoral Affairs  
C.N.H. Long Professor of Genetics and Professor of Cell Biology, and Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology

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SAVE THE DATE



## Yale GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

### Conversation with the Dean

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12

NOON - 1 P.M. ET (ONLINE)

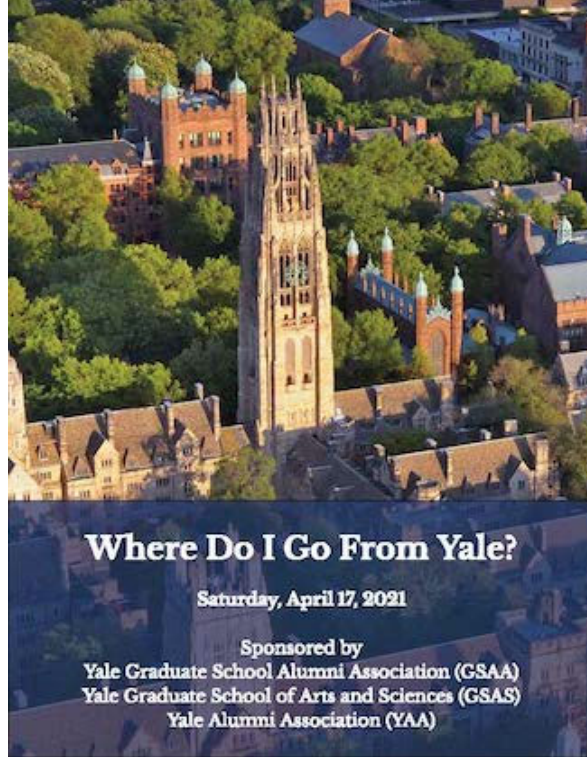
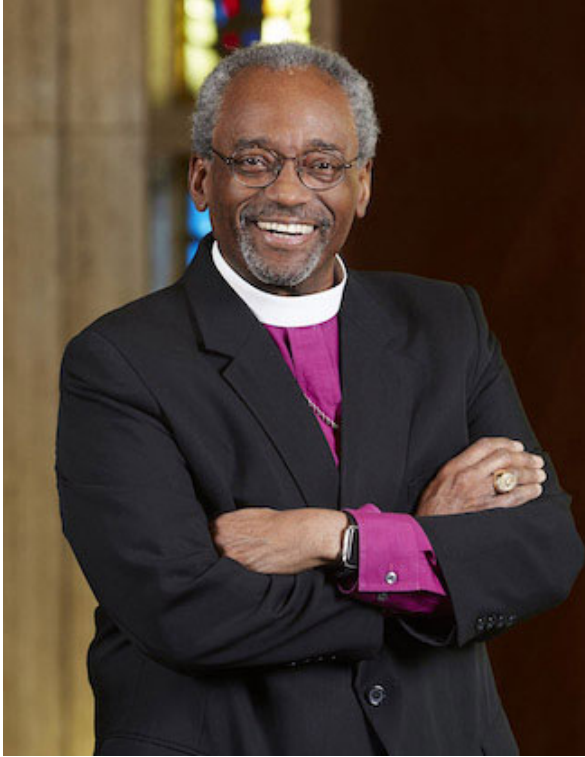
[Link to register](#)

Dean Cooley will be joined by three campus leaders who guide the efforts of distinctive, multi-disciplinary Yale programs: Alice Kaplan, Whitney Humanities Center; Stephen Pitti, Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration; and Paul Sabin, Yale Environmental Humanities.

For more information, contact Brittany Bishop at [brittany.bishop@yale.edu](mailto:brittany.bishop@yale.edu).

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SPRING SEMESTER EVENTS



### [The 17th Annual Yale Bouchet Conference](#)

On April 9, President Salovey and First Lady of Yale, Marta Moret honored [Presiding Bishop, Michael B. Curry](#), the head of the Episcopal Church, with the [2021 Bouchet Leadership Award Medal](#). Presiding Bishop Curry delivered an inspiring keynote address and was joined by guest speaker, Professor Pero Gaglo Dagbovie in sharing personal stories and visions for emerging scholars.

The award was the culmination of the two-day conference honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Edward Alexander Bouchet (1852-1918) who graduated from Yale College in 1874. Dr. Bouchet went on to be the first self-identified African American to receive a doctorate from an American university when he earned a Ph.D. in physics at Yale University in 1876. His degree was the sixth doctorate in physics ever awarded in the U.S. He was also one of the first African Americans to be elected to the prestigious Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

This year, participants took part in discussions and workshops on the theme of *Our Social Justice Imperative: Shifting Societal Norms*.

### [View Presiding Bishop Curry's keynote address](#)

*Pictured above: Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry (M.Div.'78) and an aerial view of the Yale campus*

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### [Where Do I Go from Yale? and Three-Minute Thesis \(3MT\)](#)

Many thanks to those of you who were able to attend this year's [WDIGFY Conference](#) on April 17. The day started with an exciting keynote panel featuring an accomplished group of recent alumni who have forged sometimes unexpected careers after their graduate studies at Yale. It was a fast-paced program filled with networking opportunities, practical career advice, industry information sessions, and actions students could take right away. Announcements of the [Three-Minute Thesis \(3MT\) Competition Winners](#) concluded the program.

[View the WDIGFY keynote panel discussion](#)

[View the winning 3MT submissions](#)

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NEW FACES AT GSAS

### Danica C. Tisdale Fisher

Danica C. Tisdale Fisher joined GSAS at the start of 2021 as the assistant dean of diversity. Dean Fisher came to Yale from the University of California, Davis where she served as director of summer sessions, a program offering more than 700 courses to over 14,000 students each year. She is an accomplished higher education administrator with more than a decade of experience in the development and oversight of academic programs, policies, and initiatives. Her career has emphasized designing programs and services to meet the needs of diverse student cohorts, and support campus-wide equity and inclusion. Dean Fisher earned degrees in English from Spelman College and Temple University as well as a Ph.D. in women's, gender, and sexuality Studies from Emory University.

[Read more about Dean Fisher on the GSAS website.](#)

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### Allegra di Bonaventura

Allegra di Bonaventura took up her post as the associate dean of academic support in January, 2021. She returns to GSAS from Yale Law School (YLS) where she was the assistant director of

graduate programs in charge of post-J.D. degree programs designed to train the next generation of leading legal academics. She is an accomplished scholar, administrator and academic counselor who earned an A.B. in history and German, and a Ph.D. in history from Yale. She is the author of *For Adam's Sake: A Family Saga in Colonial New England*, winner of the New England Historical Association's James P. Hanlan Book Award and one of the *The Wall Street Journal's* best books of 2013.

[Read more about Dean di Bonaventura on the GSAS website.](#)

#### CONVERSATIONS | ART HISTORY



In March, the Graduate School Alumni Association (GSAA) sponsored the first of the new Alumni Conversations programs featuring the history of art department. The Zoom session was hosted by GSAA Board members and department alumni Carmen Bambach '81, '88 Ph.D. and Stephanie Grilli '80 Ph.D., and spearheaded by department chair Tim Barringer. It introduced alumni to current students, new faculty members, ongoing curricular initiatives and to the recently-opened facilities for object study and laboratory of conservation at West Campus.

As Tim noted, Yale's extraordinary collections lie at the core of the department, and the session showcased new forms of collaboration between faculty, students and curators at the Yale University Art Gallery, the Yale Center for British Art, the Peabody Museum and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Faculty and students joined the gathering to talk about their work and answer alumni questions, and many of the participants also stayed on at the end of the presentation for small group breakout rooms to continue the conversation informally. Professor Barringer invited those attending the session to become more involved with the department, by sharing information on their own career paths, mentoring, and networking with students and other alumni.

To get involved with networking or mentoring History of Art students, contact [Kari Coyle kari.coyle@yale.edu](mailto:kari.coyle@yale.edu).

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#### AWARD WINNERS



**Rahul Prasad, Ph.D. '87** wins [Yale Medal](#)



**Ph.D. student, Da'Von Boyd**, wins award from the National Conference of Black Political Scientists



**Andrew Horowitz, Ph.D. '14** wins Bancroft Prize for history writing

Adopted from [Yale Alumni News](#)

The Yale Medal is the highest honor presented by the Yale Alumni Association, awarded annually to members of the Yale family for their individual service to the university.

Through his understated, inspired leadership, Rahul Prasad forged closer ties between the YAA and GSAA, enriching both parties and breaking down barriers between undergraduate and graduate/professional school alumni.

His achievements include helping to launch the signature GSAA program *Where Do I Go From Yale?* increasing the involvement of graduate and professional school alumni on the YAA Board of Governors, and student outreach – recruiting students to be part of alumni activities and sponsoring students for Yale Club of San Francisco summer programs.

In March, Da'Von Boyd's work on Dr. King was awarded the 2021 Alex Willingham Best Political Theory Paper Award from the National Conference of Black Political Scientists for his paper, *Spiritual Strivings: An Analysis of Dr. King's Use of Spirituality in His Theory of Political Action in the Civil Rights Movement*.

"Believe it or not, there are some political theorists who would say that religion is just a veneer for politics. That King isn't really a religious thinker, and that instead his arguments are [only] democratically motivated," Boyd said.

Boyd's research provides a reconstruction of both the Afro-Christian and the secular in King's political philosophy. "Rather than justifying a particular political praxis based on claims of divine affirmation," Boyd writes in the paper, "King broadens his moral argument to capture the different sensibilities of his new allies who are equally concerned with the intersecting political difficulties that face the nation and the world; yet did not have the same spiritual strivings."

[The New York Times](#) (03/23/21) wrote:

"Andy Horowitz's [Katrina: A History, 1915-2015](#), published by Harvard University Press, was described by the jury as 'a masterful and gripping reconstruction of an unnatural disaster,'" which 'decenters the devastating hurricane and flooding' in 2005 to provide a 'richly researched environmental, social, urban and political history of New Orleans.'

Reviewing the book in The Los Angeles Review of Books, [Scott W. Stern](#) credited Horowitz, an assistant professor at Tulane University, with writing a book that stands as 'an argument for the relevance of history itself....'

The Bancroft, which includes an award of \$10,000, was established in 1948 by the trustees of Columbia University, with a bequest from the historian Frederic Bancroft. Books are evaluated for "the scope, significance, depth of research, and richness of interpretation.





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#### A MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI FUND



Greetings, fellow alumni!

I hope this spring brings renewed optimism and energy to all your endeavors. For me, I'm most looking forward to traveling and safely gathering with family and friends.

I first joined the Yale Graduate School alumni community just over two decades ago. At that time, I was unmindful of the incredible impact that Yale and the GSAS network would have on my life. Today, I am acutely aware of how full my life is due in large part to my Yale connections. I am grateful to be a member of this esteemed community. Moreover, I am overjoyed that my daughter, a first-year in the college, will come to know her own Yale alumni community in a few years and that we will share in this legacy together.

The appreciation for my Yale education, continued present-day relationships with faculty and department heads, as well as frequent trips back to New Haven led me to get involved in volunteering with the Alumni Fund a few years ago. Serving as chair of the Graduate School

Alumni Fund has been a rewarding experience and has opened my eyes to the amazing generosity of our alumni community. This work has deepened my connection to the school, expanded my alumni network, and made me even prouder of my Yale heritage.

Alumni support continues to play a critical role in the funding of generous fellowship and stipend packages for scholars and researchers. That's what makes this volunteer work so important. The network of GSAS Alumni Fund volunteers work annually to solicit and steward unrestricted, immediately expendable donations from fellow alumni. If you would like to join this important group, send an email to [gradalumni.fund@yale.edu](mailto:gradalumni.fund@yale.edu) to learn more and get involved.

The Graduate School now raises more unrestricted money than ever before, which is fortunate and timely given the rising cost of a graduate education. One reason for the increase in funding can be attributed to three GSAS alumni, Kemal Ciliz, Rahul Prasad, and Sharmila Majumdar, who stepped forward with matching challenges to inspire gifts from those in our community. I can tell you firsthand, these gifts have a direct impact on students and are genuinely appreciated by Dean Lynn Cooley who is able to direct how they are spent. If you've made your gift already this year, I thank you.

I look forward to providing you with periodic updates on the Yale Graduate School Alumni Fund. It is my hope that by June 30, 2021 I will write to our community with additional encouraging news on this year's fundraising efforts. Until then, I wish you all the best and continued health in this new year.

Should you wish to make a gift, I'd be remiss to not share the graduate school's online giving page: [yale.edu/givegraduateschool](http://yale.edu/givegraduateschool).

Sincerely,

Gene Wang '99 Ph.D.  
Chair, Yale Graduate School Alumni Fund

DONATE TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL ALUMNI FUND

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