

# News from the German Rhodes community



Newsletter of the Association of German Rhodes Scholars  
June 2017

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# Foreword of the President

By Hans-Paul Bürkner

Germany & St Catherine's 1976

Dear Fellow Rhodes Scholars,

Again in the past twelve months, the Rhodes Scholarships expanded their reach and their footprint. They have become truly global and bring together great talent from around the world. As you heard from Charles Conn, there have been plenty of applications in the emerging markets that are now part of the program and truly outstanding scholars have been chosen. In a world that continues to globalize, this is a very important development for all of us.

The Rhodes Scholar Network continues to thrive as more special interest groups are being established. The Open Forum also sees an increasing number of contributions. The political divide that characterizes some of the developed countries these days, and especially the USA, is also reflected in the discussions in the Forum. Not all contributions may be to everyone's liking. Still, they represent the broad spectrum of views among the Rhodes Scholars. Even though I do not agree with some of the remarks and opinions, I find it interesting to get an idea of what is on people's minds. In this spirit, I find that we should not close down such exchanges but see them as an important reflection of the ongoing struggles and discussions in our societies.

Anne Roemer-Mahler has put together the many pieces of the Newsletter: the profiles of the two newly elected Rhodes Scholars, of two Scholars in Residence, of two Alumni and special contributions on the Rhodes Healthcare Forum and on Scientists and Engineers. You can also find the dates and places of several upcoming events at the end. I would like to draw your attention to the contribution by Claus Ruetsch on our fundraising efforts. Some of you may think: "Not again." It is, however, crucial that we continue to contribute to the Rhodes Trust and thus secure our two German Rhodes Scholarships. So, please be generous.

Warm regards,



**Hans-Paul Bürkner**

President – Association of German  
Rhodes Scholars  
Chairman of The Boston Consulting Group  
(Germany & St Catherine's 1976)



# Two New German Scholars Elect

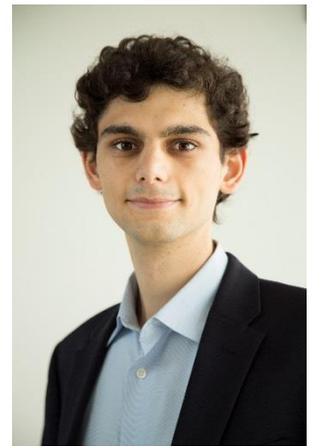
By Anne Roemer-Mahler  
Germany & St. Antony's 2003

## Timur Ohloff

Scholar-Elect 2017

### Short biography:

Timur (\*1993) grew up in Munich as the oldest of five siblings before moving to Berlin as a federal volunteer. He graduated from the John F. Kennedy Institute at Freie Universität Berlin with a perfect grade point average. A DAAD and Studienstiftung scholar, he spent his junior year at Duke University studying American politics. Timur has worked for U.S. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, the German Embassy Washington, and the Green Parliamentary Group in the Bundestag. A German-Turkish citizen, political activist, and cancer awareness advocate, Timur aspires to become a public servant. At Oxford, he will pursue an M.Phil. in Politics (Comparative Government).



**Timur Ohloff**

### How did you hear about the Rhodes Scholarship?

During my year at Duke, I passed a wall with portraits of Rhodes Scholars every time I entered the main library.

### What was your first reaction after receiving the Scholarship?

Walking into the room for the announcement, I saw my name handwritten on paper, giving me a few precious seconds to prepare. Silently, I was overcome by joy, as well as an immense sense of relief.

### What does being a Rhodes Scholar mean to you?

It's a great honor and an even greater responsibility. I consider the trust placed in me by the committee an obligation to do good and conduct myself worthy of the Rhodes community.

### How are you planning to contribute to fighting the world's fight?

I will fight the world's fight through a commitment to public service and my passion for politics. I care deeply about foreign, health, and education policy, and aspire to become a transatlantic bridgebuilder, an advocate on behalf of patients, and a fighter for equality of opportunity.

# Timur Ohloff

## Continued

What image do you connect with the University of Oxford?

Intellectual inspiration, aesthetic beauty, and the excitement of college life.

Why did you choose to study politics in Oxford?

The M.Phil. in Politics (Comparative Government) will train me rigorously as a political scientist and prepare me professionally for public service. Few postgraduate programs in political science manage to do both, and none does it better than Oxford.

To get to know you as a person a bit better, please tell us what is your idea of a perfect day?

An early morning rise; progress on my academic work, as well as a cause I am passionate about; an exciting conversation with a friend over a nutritious lunch; a round of pick-up basketball in the afternoon; a full family dinner table with lots of laughs; a concert by the Berlin Philharmonic with my girlfriend; and a good night's sleep.

What is one of your most favorite books and why?

"Eating Animals" by Jonathan Safran Foer (2009). It is a book that has both shaped my thinking and changed my behavior, a feat accomplished by few works of nonfiction. The book tackles big moral questions without any condescension toward those who eat animals; it's both personal and political; and it's a captivating read. Last but not least, what is the best advice you ever received and who gave it to you?

"Spend time with family and loved ones. Enjoy yourself. I think life gets better when you get older, but there won't be another time like now."

My mentor

# Arne Scheu

Scholar-Elect 2017

## Short biography:

Arne Scheu graduated from the University of Konstanz with a B.Sc. in the interdisciplinary field of Life Science and is currently pursuing an M.Sc. in Bioscience with a focus on biomolecular engineering at KAUST. Notably, he was involved in research on the control of DNA repair, the fundamental line of defence against cancer, and on plant stress tolerance for crop development. He is driven by a strong interest in the underlying mechanisms of life combined with a desire to help: for him, scientific research and development are a pivotal service to society, key to facing the global challenges of our time. Now, he wants to pronounce his focus on solution-oriented research in the rising field of protein engineering. To this end, he will pursue a DPhil in Biochemistry at Oxford.



Arne Scheu

## How did you hear about the Rhodes Scholarship?

My sister received a newsletter about the Rhodes Scholarship and kindly brought it to my attention.

## What was your first reaction after receiving the Scholarship?

I was quite stunned by the selection but also felt incredibly lucky and thankful.

## What does being a Rhodes Scholar mean to you?

It is a great honour and responsibility. As a future student of Oxford, it is an opportunity to engage with fascinating science in an excellent research group and to become a full member of the scientific community. As a Rhodes Scholar, I can engage with a unique, diverse, global network of people, enabling us to integrate various backgrounds and expertise to achieve greater good than each of us could on their own.

## How are you planning to contribute to fighting the world's fight?

I see various critical challenges that we - as a global society - will be facing in the future, exceeding regional and political boundaries. To fight climate change and antimicrobial resistance, for instance, we need scientific and technological advancement, to mitigate and hopefully reverse the damage we have caused. However, science cannot be isolated; we will only be able to solve these issues by coordinating our efforts beyond any boundaries and disciplines. I want to commit my research to the discovery of such solutions while crossing these boundaries to integrate our collective knowledge into our collective actions.

## What image do you connect with the University of Oxford?

The University of Oxford stands for history, culture, and science. It is a place of knowledge, and truly awe-inspiring.

# Arne Scheu

## Continued

Why did you choose to study synthetic biology in Oxford?

I finally chose Biochemistry. I chose to study towards a DPhil in Biochemistry with the protein nanotechnology group of Prof. Howarth to advance my skill and expertise in protein engineering towards the next generation of biotechnology and synthetic biology. I see this as a rising field, crucial for new advances in biomedicine and –industry, providing key technologies to improve our global community in the future.

To get to know you as a person a bit better, please tell us what is your idea of a perfect day?

A day can be perfect for many reasons. For me, it could be a day I spend with my friends and family, a hike through nature, a cultural experience, or an exciting research result. Perhaps then, “the” perfect day would combine all these?

What is one of your most favorite books and why?

"De måske egnede" (Literal: The maybe suitable; English title: Borderliners) by Peter Høeg. The dissonance of the first-person narrator with "The plan to abolish darkness" (German title) of his boarding school, an external pressure towards "their ideal of diligence and precision" unfolds in a story that raises stimulating questions about psychology, society, morale, and even time itself.

Last but not least, what is the best advice you ever received and who gave it to you?

My father once told me that results are secondary; instead, he would be proud of the effort I made, as this effort will get me to the goals I set for myself. For me, this encourages the development of long-term goals of various scales, from myself to the community, and to maintain focus throughout setbacks and successes. Furthermore, it is your own choice what to aim for; you set your own limits, thus your goals can be extraordinary.

# Fundraising

By Claus-Jörg Rüttsch  
Germany & University 1974

Since 2012 the German Rhodes Scholars Association has supported the fund-raising efforts of the Rhodes Trust and, in particular, worked to secure donations from alumni. Our efforts, which have been appreciated by Rhodes House, were successful. The high participation rate the German Rhodes Scholars have achieved is fantastic and contributed to the high participation of alumni in the Trust's fundraising efforts worldwide. That high participation made it easier for the Trust to encourage other donors to help. We would like to thank everyone who made a gift in the past for their help and support.



**Claus-Jörg Rüttsch**

We are aware of concerns about the increasing focus on fundraising in communications from us and Rhodes House; however, after the financial crisis Rhodes Trust needed our help and fundraising support to secure the endowment. In February it was reported that the goal of the *Campaign for the Second Century* had been reached, raising over £150 million to secure in perpetuity the 83 Scholarships existing at the start of the campaign. Moving forward, like many educational institutions, the financial model for the Trust requires annual giving to support a portion of current costs and also to further enhance the Scholarships. The Trust will be seeking £1 million each year for the Rhodes Scholars Annual Fund to finance these costs. The Annual Fund will support, among other things:

- The Character, Service and Leadership Programme, now an important part of the Rhodes Scholar experience
- Research and travel grants
- Intergenerational Scholar convening and collaboration

It is the activities funded by the Rhodes Scholars Annual Fund that will make the Rhodes community so special to all Scholars. For this reason we will continue our efforts in Germany to contribute to the £1 million goal and ask for your much appreciated support with donations of any size for the financial year 2016/2017 which ends on June 30.

With a new scheme for this year and next year we want to increase the value of the donations we are receiving from alumni and provide an additional incentive for Rhodes Scholars to make a donation of any size according to their means.

# Fundraising

## *Continued*

Under this scheme we will match any donation paid by a German Rhodes Scholar up to 1000 € that is paid this year and pledged for next year. The matching will be regardless of where the Rhodes Scholar lives, whether the donation is paid into an account in Germany or directly to Rhodes House. All gifts will be doubled (*up to €1000 per gift*) by a *matching fund established by a group of German Rhodes Scholars*. It means that all donations up to 1000 € not only contribute to a high participation rate, but are more valuable and have a multiplier effect. It would be great if this scheme would lead to more donations this year and next year.

In addition to the matching scheme, everyone who donates this financial year, before 30 June 2017, will be included in the Second Century Annual Report honour roll of donors for 2016/17.

For further information, comments or questions, please contact:  
Dr. Claus-Jörg Rüttsch, [claus.rue@gmail.com](mailto:claus.rue@gmail.com)

# The Rhodes Healthcare Forum

By Lukas Lange

Chair, Rhodes Healthcare Forum  
Germany & Magdalen, 2015



From daily talks and workshops to weekend-long gatherings, Rhodes House has plenty to offer to satisfy the thirst for knowledge of many in our community. One of these gatherings is the Rhodes Healthcare Forum.

The forum is an informal place for past and present Rhodes Scholars with shared interests in health to foster existing relationships, form new friendships and engage in meaningful conversation. In addition to the scholar community, we reach out to healthcare leaders from around the world to join us and discuss issues close to their heart.

With over 120 attendees, consisting of ~30 high profile speakers from the Rhodes community and beyond, ~20 Rhodes alumni guests from all over the world and 70 current students, the event was not just a complete success, but likely the most high-profile health conference in Oxford this past year. It was particularly encouraging to welcome many familiar faces from Germany back to Rhodes House, including **Alexander Straub** (Germany & St John's, 1996), **Anne Roemer-Mahler** (Germany & St Antony's, 2003), **Claus Rütch** (Germany & University, 1974) and **Heidi Stöckl** (Germany & Nuffield, 2006). I hope to see even more of you at this year's forum.



Attendees of the 2016 Rhodes Healthcare Forum in Milner Hall

# The Rhodes Healthcare Forum

## Continued

Over the course of two days, we discussed a wide variety of topics, ranging from genomics to digital health, drug discovery for low-resource settings and global health policy. In the format of keynotes, panel discussions and breakout workshops, we saw a large number of inspiring contributions, including:

- Numerous thought-provoking discussions with **Agnes Binagwaho**, former Minister of Health for Rwanda and current senior lecturer at Harvard Medical School
- An inspiring talk by **Sir John Bell** (Alberta & Magdalen, 1975), Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford,
- Panel discussions with **Ramona Doyle** (Alabama & Somerville, 1981), CMO at Blade Therapeutics, a small biotech company in the San Francisco bay area,
- A fantastic speech by **Abdul El-Sayed** (Michigan & Oriel, 2009), the former Director & Health Officer of Detroit and current Democratic candidate for governor of Michigan,
- Fascinating conversations with **Tariro Makadzange** (Zimbabwe & Balliol, 1999), a physician and research scientist at the Massachusetts General Hospital and the Parirenyatwa Hospital in Zimbabwe and Rhodes Trustee,
- And mentoring sessions with **Paul Stoffels**, Chief Scientific Officer of Johnson & Johnson, among many others.

For more information on the 2016 programme, speakers, photos & videos of the event and more, please visit:

<https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/news/events/events/2016/november/2nd-annual-rhodes-healthcare-forum/>

In addition to the formal elements of the programme, the forum provides ample time and space to connect with other attendees during the many mentoring sessions, the dinner in Milner Hall and the obligatory nightcap at the King's Arms.

In 2017, the Rhodes Healthcare Forum goes into its 3rd year, with this year's conference likely happening the weekend of November 11 and 12 at Rhodes House. So mark your calendars, we will soon send out a save-the-date including more information. This year's theme is "Forward Together - Approaching Global Inequities in Health", and we are currently working hard to put together a stimulating weekend with many exciting speakers. **If you have suggestions for topics we should discuss, would like to speak at the forum or know of anyone who should, do not hesitate to get in touch with me, I would love to hear from you!**

Email: [lukas.lange91@gmail.com](mailto:lukas.lange91@gmail.com)



**Tariro Makadzange with  
Astrid Christoffersen-Deb**

# Scientists and Engineers – Will They Ever Understand Each Other?

By Martin Poppe

Germany & Magdalen 1978

## Short biography:

Martin Poppe, born in 1956, came to Magdalen College to read Physics in 1978, concluding his stay with a D.Phil. in 1981. After five years of research in Hamburg (receiving a “Habilitation”) and two more at CERN, he left pure research for engineering at Robert Bosch GmbH. Since 1994, he has been professor for electrical and electronic engineering at Fachhochschule Münster. He is (co-) author of various books on engineering, Maxwell’s theory of electro magnetism, and music. He is married and he has two sons.



**Martin Poppe**

## Two Buildings – Two Galaxies

Oxford’s Nuclear Physics Lab is only a few yards away from the Engineering Lab. Nevertheless, there is no direct pathway between them. In fact, the walking distance from one entrance to the other is a two minute walk. The following article shall describe why this architectural detail is of allegoric nature and what might be the ingredients for a closer connection.

If a scientist and an engineer talk about the same subject, the unbiased observer will often get the impression that they report from different galaxies. The terminology is incompatible and the reasoning is almost orthogonal. The latter seems quite natural. For an engineer, looking for similarities is a key strategy. If a new problem can be related to similar ones solved in the past, the path towards the next success is well

paved. Quite in contrast, a scientist will look for dissimilarities, if possible even inconsistencies, as a proven inconsistency may be the beginning of a new theory.

For most of the 20th century, different wording and different reasoning was no problem: scientists did research while engineers designed and manufactured products. There was little contact and so they could work without disturbing each other. This is no longer true. High speed computers, the GPS system and many more technological top products can only be developed in a close co-operation between electrical engineers, mechanical engineers, physicists and chemists. Therefore the question is not, whether scientists and engineers can understand each other. The question is: how long will they be able to afford not to do so.

# Scientists and Engineers

## Continued

### A Special Case:

#### Physics and Electrical Engineering

The terminology used by electrical engineers was largely developed in the second half of the 19th century. The two revolutions now known as the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics were still to come. And electromagnetic waves were thought to be transported by a strange substance called "ether". Some technical terms being in use today still carry these ideas. The "electrical displacement current" postulated by Maxwell and the "magnetic stimulation" was assumed to be related to the ether. The terms "magnetic field strength" and "magnetic flux density" may be traced back to even earlier times. Their origin is a model of electro magnetism which Maxwell and Hertz proved to be valid in the static case, only.

None of the terms quoted in the last paragraph can be found in books or articles on modern field theories. The reason is simple: while all of the equations used in classical electro magnetism are correct at a macroscopic level, the meaning of their constituencies has undergone dramatic changes. Seen from a modern perspective, many technical terms used today do no longer describe the nature of things. They rather indicate what was assumed to be their meaning more than one century ago. Also, and even worse: at distances corresponding to the size of one electron's orbit, i.e. in the nanometer range, the macroscopic equations can no longer be applied. Just imagine, how much co-operation

between scientists and engineers could be eased, if they agreed identical terms to have identical meanings. They might agree a flux density always to be the product of a density and a flux velocity. They could also agree that what is called a field actually really is a field and not only one of two contributions forming a field (as in the case of the "fields"  $H$  and  $D$ ). Teaching would profit most: If the field of the magnetic force (the  $B$  field) was simply called field of the magnetic force, and not "in the static case, something like the field of a floating fluid and more complicated in the dynamic case due to Maxwell's correction" students might welcome the simplification.

Helping students to understand is a rewarding exercise, may-be topped by motivation, only. So, I am trying hard to spread the news of electro dynamics with less overhead. I have also presented the ideas to the International Electro technical Commission (IEC) in a committee meeting in Prague in 2015, and to the general assembly in Frankfurt in 2016. For anyone in Oxford who may be is interested in the subject: please drop a line to [poppe@fh-muenster.de](mailto:poppe@fh-muenster.de)

# Alumni Profile: Guido Schmidt-Traub

Germany and St. Anthony's 1998

By Anne Roemer-Mahler

Germany and St Antony's 2003

## Short biography:

Guido Schmidt-Traub is Executive Director of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and a member of the Governing Council of Future Earth. He has served as climate change advisor to the Africa Progress Panel secretariat and was CEO of Paris-based CDC Climat Asset Management, an investment company regulated by the French financial markets regulator. From 2008-2010, Guido was Director and Partner at South Pole Carbon Asset Management in Zurich. Before, he managed the Millennium Development Goal Support Team at UNDP (2006-2008) and served as Policy Advisor and then as Associate Director of the UN Millennium Project in New York, which was tasked with developing a concrete action plan for the world to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Earlier, Guido was Partner at IndexIT Scandinavia, a private equity fund for early-stage technology companies, and consultant at McKinsey & Company in Germany. He took the M.Phil. in Economics in 2000 (St. Antony's College).



**Guido Schmidt-Traub**

## Thinking back to your time as a Rhodes Scholar in Oxford, what memories come to your mind?

Oxford was formative and wonderful. In particular, I remember the long evening conversations in various college dining rooms about every imaginable topic. St Antony's is a great college where outstanding scholars from many different fields come together. I also learnt to tie a bow tie. And, yes, there were a few very early mornings on the river, but I did not last long in the rowing team.

## What was the greatest challenge you experienced in Oxford?

The M.Phil. in Economics was intense. My previous degree was in the natural sciences, so I found it challenging to jump into graduate course work in economics, but it paid off. The M.Phil. has given me a very rounded training in economics, which I use every day.

## Can you briefly describe your current work for us?

I run the Sustainable Development Solutions Network commissioned by the UN Secretary-General to "mobilize

# Alumni Profile: Guido Schmidt-Traub

## Continued

knowledge for sustainable development". We are building a global network of universities and work with businesses to develop innovative solutions for sustainable development challenges. For example, we helped prepare the Paris Climate Agreement by developing national pathways for decarbonizing national energy systems – something that had not been done rigorously before. We are building an online university for sustainable development and are looking into how new technologies can be deployed to improve education and healthcare delivery. A particular personal interest of mine is to understand how public and private funds can be mobilized and deployed for complex sustainable development challenges.

**What aspects of your work do you enjoy the most?**

I have become a generalist with public and private sector experience, and I love the breadth of challenges and issues I work with. I am especially interested in how technical and operational knowledge from different communities can be brought together to design and implement national-scale investment programs. In my experience, many programs fail because we don't integrate well across epistemic groups or across the public and private sectors. These are the questions I enjoy working on at the SDSN.

**Thirty years ago, the concept of 'sustainable development' was put squarely on the international political agenda by the Brundtland Report "Our Common Future". What do you think have been the greatest achievements since that time?**

It's been mixed. On the positive

ledger, the concept of sustainable development covering economic development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability has become widely accepted, and in September 2015 all UN member states adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved by 2030. The Paris Climate Agreement adopted in the same year has been a diplomatic breakthrough. Not even the Trump Administration will stop this momentum.

In recent years there has been tremendous progress on economic growth, poverty reduction, health, and education. In particular progress on reducing child mortality in some of the poorest countries has been tremendous, but close to 1 billion people still live in extreme poverty. On other dimensions, we have been going in the wrong direction since the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Greenhouse gas emissions have kept rising, the pace of biodiversity loss is accelerating, inequality is rising around the world (with the exception of Turkey and a few Latin American countries), and the oceans are being emptied of fish. Humanity is approaching major tipping points. Meanwhile the science has hardened, so we really know that things will get very bad unless we change course. We are also seeing the stressors affect our day-to-day politics with inequality driving populism in the US, Europe, and other parts of the world.

Thankfully, we have most of the tools to decarbonize energy systems, ensure sustainable agriculture, promote sustainable urban growth, and manage the oceans sustainably. We must now apply this knowledge to

# Alumni Profile: Guido Schmidt-Traub

## Continued

design and implement the long-term transformations to implement the Paris Climate Agreement and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We have less clarity, though, on how to reduce inequalities in the face of rapid automation and technological change.

**The interplay between science and policy is key for sustainable development. What are the greatest challenges you see here? And do you have any suggestions on how some of them might be overcome?**

In the end, it is ideas and technology that bend the arc of history, so bringing science to bear on long-term sustainable development strategies is one of the biggest and most urgent challenge. In my experience government leaders, mayors, and – increasingly – CEOs of major corporations are deeply aware of the challenges. They are worried, but they do not know what they should do. Science is critical for providing this knowledge base, and we definitely need to do better on communicating the science, particularly to leaders. But science must also move beyond describing complex systems towards studying how to manage the system transformation. For example, how do we transform energy systems to zero net carbon emissions by mid-century or how do we preserve biodiversity in the face of accelerating climate change? I see the Sustainable Development Goals as wonderful tools for framing these questions. At the SDSN we work to mobilize universities around the challenges and to engage them on developing long-term pathways towards achieving the goals.

**In your career you have moved between the public and private sectors. What opportunities and challenges has this created for you?**

I have found it very enriching since businesses work very differently from policy organizations. This is probably why public and private organizations often do not work well together. Businesses tend to be much more focused, specialized, and efficient – also in their management culture. On the other hand, they have the luxury to pick the challenges they engage on. This is not possible in the public sector, so the problems there are often more wicked, and the decision space is more constrained.

Sustainable development consists of complex public-private investment challenges, so we need to find better ways to take them to scale. My personal experience has been helpful in better understanding the issues – for example how public and private financing can be blended.

As enriching as these changes have been, switching between public and private roles is not easy since each have their own distinct cultures and career tracks.

**What does 'fighting the world's fight' mean to you?**

In 2001 HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria seemed out of control in Africa and much of the developing world. The consensus was that these diseases could not be controlled in the poorest countries. Yet, 15 years later, mortality has dropped between 50-80%, and we are talking about eradicating these diseases. This remarkable story shows how global action around science-based targets and backed up by adequate financing can lead

# Alumni Profile: Guido Schmidt-Traub

## *Continued*

to tremendous results. But at the heart of this success were a small number of public health leaders who fought the world's fight and made it their mission to eradicate HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria. They chipped away at all the technical problems and all the excuses for inaction until the world moved.

So for me fighting the world's fight means taking ownership of the world's big sustainable development challenges and asking what it will really take to address them. This is quite different from how most organizations look at these issues since they are conditioned by the changes they can affect directly themselves.

# Alumni Profile:

## Ute Wartenberg Kagan

Germany & Corpus Christi 1987

### Short biography:

Born in Saarbrücken in 1963, Ute Wartenberg Kagan studied History, Classics and Classical Archaeology in her hometown before leaving in 1985 for Oxford where she read Classics and received a PhD in Papyrology. She was a Rhodes Scholar from 1987-1990 and a Junior Research Fellow from 1988-1991. From 1991-1998, Ute Wartenberg Kagan was Curator of Greek Coins in the British Museum, and since 1998 has worked at the American Numismatic Society, where she was appointed Executive Director in 1999. She is married to Jonathan Kagan, who also studied Classics at Oxford, and has a 14-year old daughter and two older step-children. She is the author and/or editor of numerous books, articles websites and other publications.



**Ute Wartenberg**

### Thinking back to your time as a Rhodes Scholar in Oxford, what memories come to your mind?

Since my time as a Rhodes Scholar overlapped by two years with a JRF at University College, my experience was more of a Fellow than a student, which meant that I spent very little time among other graduate students in my college (my main student experience was at Corpus Christi, where I started as an undergraduate visiting student). Apart from writing my doctorate, I taught undergraduate tutorials, often 12-15 hours a week in Greek literature to an almost exclusively male student body. This was odd, since many of these young men had gone to well-known English public schools, which were not open to girls, and Latin and Greek was

more or less a male subject. The concept of having a woman as a tutor, and a German one on top of it, was puzzling to some of them, and since I was only a few years older than my students, this was at times difficult - for both sides. I had very little contact with other Rhodes Scholars, but at times I saw the Warden of Rhodes House, Anthony Kenny, in particular if I had issues, and there is one particular episode that I remember well. Because of my dual role as Fellow and Rhodes Scholar, the college thought that they could save money by having the Rhodes Trust continue to pay my stipend. When I raised the question of pension contributions, I was told that for a variety of reason I would not receive them, although other JRFs did. So I appealed to the

# Alumni Profile: Ute Wartenberg

## Continued

Warden, who called the Master and told him to treat me like other Fellows and pay pension benefits. Somehow it was felt that a woman might not need a pension. The Master of Univ complained about my pension demands openly for a few nights at high table while I sat at the end of the table.

My other memory of Anthony Kenny is his foresight to open up German Rhodes Scholarships to all Germans, when the GDR still existed. I remember a discussion with him, before the fall of the Wall, when he considered the political situation, musing about a united Germany and such things. At the time, this was such a revolutionary idea, at least to me, but he thought it was important to have the Rhodes Trust think about this. Ultimately, a new German scholarship was created (for a while).

It was people like Anthony Kenny or the many other famous thinkers in Oxford that shaped my view of the importance of academia and the humanities for a just and humane society. Although I benefited enormously from my time in Oxford for my career, it was the environment in which one would meet people outside one's subject that broadened my views.

### What was the greatest challenge you experienced in Oxford?

There were many challenges, and I cannot say that one was so great that it should be singled out. In no particular order, I would mention that teaching Latin and Greek on an advanced level in English or writing academic texts, when I had no English during my Gymnasium education, was incredibly hard. Here I

benefitted from my supervisors and tutors, who patiently taught me in every tutorial. Ultimately though, I realized that my Latin and Greek was as good as that of my contemporaries, who had been to Winchester or some school like this. Overcoming this challenge of writing and speaking English gave me a lot of confidence.

Another tough, unusual part of Oxford is the mixture of academic and social life, both at a highly advanced level, and I think many German scholars were perplexed when they first arrived. I rowed in the College Eight, although I had never been near a boat before coming to England, I played in an orchestra and a string quartet, and did all these things that everyone will remember from their own Oxford day. Combining this all with teaching and finishing a DPhil got a bit much. As a JRF living in college, I was also expected to keep an eye on undergraduates and provide help if needed. This role was very interesting, and I learned a lot about mental illness from a colleague who was a behavioural psychologist. Often this role was rather hands-on, and I remember having to look after a Chinese girl in 1989 during Finals, who was so distraught about the events in Tiananmen Square, that it was decided that she would sleep in my rooms for the week. I very much enjoyed these tasks and my interactions with the students, and during these years, I learned the importance of time-management.

### Can you briefly describe your current work for us?

Since I left Oxford, I have worked in museums. After spending seven years

# Alumni Profile: Ute Wartenberg

## Continued

in the British Museum in London, I was hired to lead the American Numismatic Society, an institution specializing in coins and money in the USA. Founded in 1858, it is one of the oldest museums in America, and its primary focus is academic research, publications, and digital humanities. As a Director, I interact with the Trustees, staff, members and the public. It is a small institution, with a staff of less than 30 people. My primary tasks involve administration, a lot of fundraising, and implementing programs that the Trustees, the staff and I want to carry out. Luckily, I still have time to do my own academic research on ancient Greek coinage, and I write articles and attend a fair number of international conferences.

**What aspects of your work do you enjoy the most?**

I greatly enjoy the aspect of my work that explains my field to a wider public, which is why I switched to a museum. The challenge of coming up with innovative programs about monetary history is stimulating, and I have a fantastic team of scholars around me. For the last few years, my institution has been on the forefront of developing new tools in the field of digital humanities, which I very much enjoy. In order to get all this done, I have to come up with ways of raising large sums of money to support the institution and the programs. At times, it is really hard, but it is never boring.

**Your research interest focuses on ancient Greek coinage, and you also take an interest in current US coinage. What fascinates you about coinage?**

Coins can be so many different things: they are foremost money, and they have archaeological, cultural, artistic,

and economic implications, which one can study. I particularly enjoy the aspect that museum collections of coins provide access to huge amount of data, which can be analyzed in less traditional ways. My own scholarly interest is currently focused on the earliest coins from the 7th century BCE. Rather oddly, the question why coins were made so relatively late in historical terms is still a mystery, and I am trying to write a catalogue of these coins with a colleague from Vienna.

My interest in US coinage came about almost accidentally. In 2002, I was appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury as a member and chairperson of a government committee that oversees the designs of all US coins and medals. Oddly, this committee is called a Citizen Committee, and the fact that I was not a US Citizen but simply a new immigrant was completely overlooked in this process of vetting and interviews. The political component of coin design is both fascinating and frustrating, since artistically good designs often loose to those reached by political consensus. I also learned a fair amount about US politics during my tenure, and in particular how Washington works.

**You have spent most of your academic career in the museum world and have organized many exhibitions. What are some of the most exciting exhibitions you have been involved in?**

During my years in the British Museum, I learned a lot about exhibitions and how to convey a complex historical message through objects, and in particular coins. To this day, I co-

# Alumni Profile: Ute Wartenberg

## *Continued*

organize exhibits with large museums, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art or, more recently, the Getty Villa in Malibu. However, the most fulfilling cooperation during my time in New York was with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, where I curated a large exhibition entitled Drachmas, Doubloons and Dollars, which gave an overview of money from the beginning to the present day. I was particularly proud that the Chairman of the Fed, Alan Greenspan, came to open it, and I was able to show him around the display. He was undoubtedly the most informed visitor I have ever encountered. My second favorite exhibition was Funny Money: The Fight of the U.S. Secret Service against Counterfeit Money. I had been interested in the concept of counterfeiting for many years, and one day, shortly after President Obama took office, my colleagues at the Federal Reserve Bank and I were approached by Secret Service agents with a project of an exhibition. We were given unprecedented access to the archives of the Secret Service as well as to agents who were involved in fighting counterfeiters all over the world, and my visits to Washington were among the more amazing moments of my life as a curator. Special agents described for example their work in Central America, where counterfeiting US money is closely connected to the drug gangs there. But the best stories were those of the 1920s and 1930s, where the material could have been the script for Hollywood gangster movies.

We have heard a lot in recent years about the destruction of cultural heritage in wars and conflict. What role do ancient coins play here? This is a very large field, and one in which I have become very active in recent years. I regularly work with law enforcement on cases, while also assisting various countries in Europe to repatriate coins that were stolen from museums or illegally excavated. Sadly, ancient coins play a key role in the destruction of cultural heritage. Since coins are made of precious metal, they have been hoarded for over 2600 years all over the world. Farmers and others have always found them and sold them on, but nowadays this activity has become an extensive illegal business due to the ease with which modern metal detectors allow such activity. The problem is that coins were mass-produced and also sold in the millions these days, often on sites such as eBay, and are therefore collected by more people than any other category of looted objects. The Syrian crisis has brought this all to a head, since ISIS began to systematically blow up ancient sites as well as literally employ people to dig up antiquities, which can be sold on the international market. What was perhaps most upsetting was the intention of ISIS to deliberately destroy culture itself, and as a result, governments in the US, Germany, and elsewhere, have passed legislation to prevent the import of illegally excavated antiquities, including coins. It remains to be seen whether such laws will ultimately protect

# Alumni Profile: Ute Wartenberg

## *Continued*

archaeological and cultural sites from being looted, but I personally support more stringent legislation, even if it is not perfect, since one coin can tell us a lot if properly researched. Neil McGregor's *A History of the World in 100 Objects* shows how a single piece, such as a coin, a helmet, or a chair, help explain culture in a historical context and make them available to a wider public.

**What does 'fighting the world's fight' mean to you?**

In my opinion, this is a bit of a propaganda phrase, which has become suddenly popular. I find this question hard to answer. Rhodes Scholars and many other people try in their own ways to improve the world we live in. My personal concern has always been to bring together people from different backgrounds and cultures as well as social and economic circumstances.

Numismatics and coin collecting is one of the many ways how people can share their knowledge with each other and thus become closer to each other. As the political situation in the US and elsewhere has shown, it is perhaps more important than ever to open up to people who do not have our education or income level. Using numismatics to teach about reading sources, analysing data and doing research is one way how this can be done. Is this work of mine a fight? I think such a claim would be an exaggeration, but then I think terms like "fighting the world's fight" should be perhaps used less, in particular in an educational environment.

# Report by Scholar in Residence: Tim Rudner

By Tim Rudner

Germany & New College 2016

## Short biography:

Tim (\*1991) grew up in Cologne and is reading for an MSc in Applied Statistics at Oxford. In 2016, he graduated from Yale University where he studied applied mathematics and economics. He also spent a term abroad at the University of Cambridge studying philosophy. Tim has conducted research in game theory, financial economics, and international trade theory and has worked as a consultant to the European Central Bank's Financial Research Division. He enjoys reading philosophy and cares about equitable access to education across the globe.



**Tim Rudner**

My first two terms at Oxford have been a time of decisions and of transition. When I arrived in Oxford in late September, I didn't give much thought at all to the idea that my time here might mark a turning point in my life. After all, I thought, I had everything figured out: I'll spend two years in Oxford, studying, making new friends, learning about the UK, and then head to the United States to start a PhD in economics and become an academic. These goals had guided my life for the past years, but little did I know that my first six months in Oxford would turn my plans on their head. Around the end of Michaelmas Term, I realized that many of the activities I had engaged in around Rhodes House and Oxford over the past eight weeks had a common denominator: my newly developed interest in research on, applications of, and the

societal impact from advances in machine learning and artificial intelligence.

While I came to Oxford to study statistics in preparation for future research in economics, I soon found myself increasingly fascinated by the theory behind machine learning models presented in my courses. In an effort to better understand the different approaches to machine learning, I began exploring existing probabilistic machine learning research and was instantly drawn to its combination of mathematical rigor, real world applications, and potential impact.

Meanwhile, on Rhodes Welcome Day, a few other Scholars and I talked about our shared interest in artificial intelligence ethics and the need for a Scholar group to facilitate conversations and action about

# Tim Rudner

## *Continued*

matters pertaining to artificial intelligence. Soon after, we launched the Rhodes Artificial Intelligence Lab, a group of Scholars who work with external partners to help solve real world problems using machine learning.

Somewhat coincidentally, only a week after a notable Silicon Valley entrepreneur and investor had shared his—from my perspective—troubling vision for the future of technology during a fireside chat at Rhodes House that same term, Nobel Laureate and Rhodes Scholar Mike Spence gave a fascinating talk on the far-reaching effects of job automation on the economy. Both events left me with the deep desire to help steer developments in machine learning research in a responsible and socially beneficial direction.

But my Oxford experience this past year of course extends beyond this sequence of artificial intelligence-related revelations: I discovered mindfulness, a practice of bringing one's attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment, got involved in a project started by a fellow Scholar to map out the accessibility of colleges and nearby social avenues, joined the Rhodes Economics Forum, started learning Chinese at the Oxford University Language Centre, and represented my classmates as a departmental student representative. The past two terms have been a whirlwind of events and after much reflection on my goals and interests, I gratefully accepted a DPhil offer from the Departments of Computer Science and Engineering Science to

conduct research in machine learning. I am very excited to start this new chapter of my life and to continue to engage with the Rhodes and Oxford communities. It has been a great privilege to be here, and I am deeply thankful to the Rhodes Trust for having given me this wonderful opportunity.

# Report by Scholar in Residence: Luca Springer

By Luca Springer

Germany & St. Anthony's 2016

## Short biography:

Luca (\*1993) was born in Berlin and later moved to Vienna. Before going to Oxford, he was a senior in the Dual BA Program between Columbia University and Sciences Po Paris, pursuing two bachelor degrees with specialization in Politics, Law and Economics and Philosophy and Business Management. Luca was as student representative at both universities and a member of Columbia's Honor Society. At Oxford, he pursues a MSc in Global Governance & Diplomacy. In his spare time he competitively plays basketball.



**Luca Springer**

I remember first walking through the gates of Rhodes House and pausing in the midst of the Rotunda – awe-inspired. It was a surreal moment. Sunlight was flooding into the building, illuminating the names of scholars who walked the same historical grounds more than a hundred years before me. Fascinated, I started turning around to engrave the magic of this moment in my brain. A kind but confused “Ehm, excuse me? Can I help you?” brought me back to reality. Bob (our amazing porter) had been watching me and was probably thinking his part about a tall German, slowly spinning in the midst of the Rhodes Rotunda. Slightly embarrassed, but nothing less inspired, my time in Oxford began and this short moment of bliss has become a metaphor for my scholarly experience. Indeed, the Rhodes

community has turned my life around 360 degrees. Let me try to explain: There is something truly remarkable about being part of a community that is as driven and full of purpose as the group of current scholars-in-residence. No matter where I turn, within my circle of fellow Rhodies, new knowledge I never even considered relevant to my pursuit of solving socio-political crises across the world awaits. Whilst I am still headed in the same direction, the tools I will utilize to achieve my goals have changed significantly. My decision to pursue an MSc in Computer Science in the coming year, is the direct result of being part of a community that constantly strives to innovate across disciplines. Inspired by my peers, I hope to contribute to the effort of bridging the gap between the social sciences and computer science, with

# Luca Springer

## *Continued*

the ultimate aim of advancing the field of conflict resolution and the common good overall.

To balance the never-ending flow of academic inspiration that dominates my Oxford experience, I was able to reconnect with my passion for the sport of basketball. After not touching a basketball for over two years, playing on the Oxford Blues team was a remarkable experience. Traveling through England with a group of brilliant scholars and competing on the highest university level in the UK was a refreshing complement to my coursework. Earning a full blue was probably one of the finest moments of my time in Oxford so far.

In all, I would describe my experience so far as an eclectic mix of the beautiful traditional (formal halls, ball nights, rowing, punting, croquet, lawn tennis, and old libraries) with the exhilarating modern (meeting Peter Diamandis, Rhodes Artificial Intelligence Lab, witnessing innovation, and above all being part of a community of individuals who without a doubt will shape our planet's future). This small town is full of wonders and continues to surprise me on a daily basis. Soon, the circle of Rhodes Scholars will expand, with the new cohort arriving in September, and I cannot wait to start turning, yet again.

# Upcoming Events

Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars e. V.

## Regionaltreffen in Haemelschenburg 10.-11. Juni 2017

Lippold und Christine von Klencke laden ein zu einem Treffen in Haemelschenburg am 10.-11. Juni 2017. Das Treffen beginnt am Samstag um 15 Uhr mit einem Kaffeetrinken auf dem Gutshof. Anschliessend gibt es eine Fuehrung durch die Weserrenaissanceanlage mit Kirche, Garten und Wassermuehle, und durch das Museum im Schloss. Fuer 19 Uhr ist ein Abendessen geplant. Das Angebot fuer den Sonntag umfasst einen Gottesdienst nach dem Fruehstueck, und eine anschliessend

eine Stadtbesichtigung von Hameln und das Rattenfaengerspiel vor dem Hochzeitshaus.

Haemelschenburg liegt zwischen Hameln und Bad Pyrmont. Die naechstgelegene Bahnstation ist Emmerthal und ist von Hannover in 55 Minuten zu erreichen.

Lippold und Christine von Klencke freuen sich auf euch! Wenn ihr dabei sein moechtet, meldet euch bitte bei Lippold unter: [lvklencke@aol.com](mailto:lvklencke@aol.com).

## German Rhodes Dinner in Berlin 24. November 2017 – 18:00-23:00 Uhr

Auch in diesem Jahr laedt die Vereinigung deutscher Rhodes Scholars im Herbst wieder zu einem geselligen Abend sowie zur Mitglieder-versammlung ein. Wir treffen uns um 18:00 Uhr zur Mitgliederversammlung und ab 19:00 Uhr werden dann die Kochschurzen angelegt und es wird gemeinsam gekocht.

**Wann:** Fr, 24.11.2017 – 18:00-23:00 Uhr  
**Wo:** dadarski's dinner, Kochschule Mitte, Ackerstrasse 14/15, 10115 Berlin

Im September werdet ihr hierzu noch eine gesonderte Einladung mit bitte um Rueckmeldung erhalten. **Bitte merkt Euch den Termin aber bereits vor.** Das Dinner ist eine einmalige Moeglichkeit, die neu ausgewaehlten Rhodes Scholars im Anschluss an die Auswahlsitzung Willkommen zu heißen, wichtige Weichstellung fuer die Arbeit des Vereins zu stellen und in einen netten Austausch mit anderen derzeitigen und ehemaligen Scholars einzusteigen. Wir freuen uns auf Euer Kommen!

# Upcoming Events

*Continued*

Rhodes House

## Rhodes Ventures Forum June 17-18, 2017

Alumni with an interest in entrepreneurship are welcome to participate, this event will provide plenty of opportunities for mentoring, interacting with current Scholars and to launch mentorship and incubator initiatives in the Rhodes community. Please share the following registration link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rhodes-ventures-forum-registration-32798550347>

## 40 Years of Rhodes Women September 15-17, 2017

Registration at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/forty-years-of-rhodes-women-15-17-september-2017-registration-32043328458>. If you would like to contribute to a fund to enable younger Scholars or Scholars who wouldn't be able attend the event in Oxford otherwise, please send a message to [40yearsofrhodeswomen@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk](mailto:40yearsofrhodeswomen@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk)

# How to Get and Stay in Touch

To get in touch please contact our Vice President

*As a Rhodes  
Scholar living in  
Germany...*

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... join us at one of this year's events

*As a German  
Rhodes Scholar  
living abroad...*

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... get actively involved to keep our community vibrant and alive

*As a German  
Scholar in residence  
in Oxford...*

... make a donation – no matter how large or small

Contact: Anne Roemer-Mahler  
Germany & St Antony's 2003  
Vice President, Association of German Rhodes Scholar  
[anne.roemer-mahler@gmail.com](mailto:anne.roemer-mahler@gmail.com)



Vereinigung der Deutschen Rhodes Scholars e.V.

Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars e.V.  
c/o David Klemm  
Dachbergstraße 52  
65812 Bad Soden

## Spendenformular

**JA**, ich möchte die Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars e.V. ab sofort mit einer regelmäßigen Spende unterstützen. Die Spende wird vollständig zur Förderung des Rhodes Trusts verwendet.

Bitte buchen Sie meine

vierteljährliche oder  jährliche

Spende in Höhe von

10 Euro,  50 Euro,  \_\_\_\_\_ Euro

bis auf Widerruf von meinem Konto ab.

Der Rhodes Trust veröffentlicht jährlich eine Übersicht aller Spenderinnen und Spender. Sollten Sie mit der Weitergabe Ihres Namens von der Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars an den Rhodes Trust nicht einverstanden sein, widersprechen sie bitte hier:

Ich möchte nicht, dass mein Name an den Rhodes Trust übermittelt und vom Rhodes Trust veröffentlicht wird.

Persönliche Informationen:

Vorname und Name (Kontoinhaber)	
Straße und Hausnummer	
Postleitzahl und Ort	

\_\_\_\_\_  
Datum, Ort und Unterschrift

**Bitte unterzeichnen Sie auch das SEPA-Lastschriftmandat auf der folgenden Seite und senden Sie uns die beiden Formulare in einem frankierten Umschlag zu.**

Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars e.V.  
c/o David Klemm  
Dachbergstraße 52  
65812 Bad Soden

Gläubiger-Identifikationsnummer der Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars:  
DE21ZZZ00000612146  
Mandatsreferenz ABC123

**SEPA-Lastschriftmandat**

Ich ermächtige die Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars e.V., Zahlungen von meinem Konto mittels Lastschrift einzuziehen. Zugleich weise ich mein Kreditinstitut an, die von der Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars e.V. auf mein Konto gezogenen Lastschriften einzulösen.

Hinweis: Ich kann innerhalb von 8 Wochen, beginnend mit dem Belastungsdatum, die Erstattung des belasteten Betrages verlangen. Es gelten dabei die mit meinem Kreditinstitut vereinbarten Bedingungen. Weiterhin dürfen Lastschriften nur gezogen werden, wenn die Vereinigung Deutscher Rhodes Scholars e.V. den Kontoinhaber spätestens 14 Tage vor Fälligkeit über den Zeitpunkt des Lastschrift-Einzugs und den Betrag der Lastschrift informiert hat.

Vorname und Name (Kontoinhaber)	
Straße und Hausnummer	
Postleitzahl und Ort	
Kreditinstitut (Name und BIC)	
IBAN	DE__ / ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ / __

\_\_\_\_\_  
Datum, Ort und Unterschrift