

CASA Amman Fellows 2013-2014

Nina Brekelmans graduated summa cum laude from Dartmouth College in 2012 with a B.A. in Arabic Language & Literature. She has studied Arabic at Middlebury's Summer Language School and its program in Alexandria, Egypt, and is currently pursuing an M.A. in Arab Studies at Georgetown University.

Michael Brill graduated from Westfield State University in Massachusetts where he majored in history and political science. He has previously studied Arabic in Muscat, Oman and Amman, Jordan through the CLS program. Michael is interested in the modern political and social histories of Iraq and Syria. After CASA, he plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Middle Eastern History.

Kevin Butts graduated May 2013 with a double B.A. in Arabic and Spanish from the University of Maryland. He studied Arabic in Tunisia summer 2011. After CASA he hopes to pursue graduate studies in Arabic: areas of interest include everything but particularly linguistics, history, art, politics, and culture.

James Casey is a Ph.D. student in the History Department at Princeton University specializing in history of European colonialism in Greater Syria in the twentieth century, especially the role of waqf in colonial relationships. Before beginning studies in history at Princeton, he graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in the Middle Eastern Studies M.A. program. He was previously a Fulbright student in Damascus from 2008-09 and undertook research on the matter of language and Arab nationalism in nationalist press in Syria and Lebanon during the French Mandate (1920-46). He was born in San Francisco, California and lived in Northern California for most of his life before graduating from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Besides his mother and father, he has a sister, two brothers and a cat named Ghadanfar who returned from Damascus with him. In addition to Syria, he has lived in Cairo, the Sultanate of Oman, Lebanon, France, and England.

Alice Gissing is graduate student in the Near Eastern Studies department at Princeton University. Her undergraduate work focused on European intellectual history and Arabic. Her academic interests include hadith studies, the transmission of the Qur'an, and church-state relations in 19th and 20th century France.

Joseph Leidy graduated in 2013 from Williams College majoring in Political Science and Arabic Studies. His interests include identity, comparative politics, and music in the Middle East. After CASA, Joe hopes to pursue graduate studies in Middle Eastern politics or history.

David Lennington graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a B.A. in English, Spanish, and Classics, and he is currently working towards his Ph.D. in English at Princeton University. He has studied Arabic in Morocco, Lebanon, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. He is interested in the comparative literature of the Middle Ages.

Joanna Maggard graduated from Miami University with a BA in History and Political Science. She is currently pursuing a M.A. in Arabic at Middlebury College. Her academic interests focus on colloquial Arabic dialects, and in the future she plans to continue her studies eventually achieving a Ph.D. in Arabic.

Janelle Moser will graduate in May 2013 from the University of Arizona with a Master's degree in Middle Eastern and North African Studies and Linguistics of the Middle East. Her research interests include Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language and Applied Linguistics. She graduated from the George Washington University in 2010 with a Bachelor's degree in International Affairs and Middle East Studies. She has studied Arabic in Beirut, Lebanon (The American University in Beirut) and Irbid, Jordan (Yarmouk University). After completing the CASA program, she will begin a Ph.D. focused on Applied Linguistics and Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language in fall 2014.

Gavriel Rosenfeld-Barnhard graduated from Princeton University in 2013 with a B.A. in Near Eastern Studies and a Certificate in Arabic Studies. He has previously studied Arabic in Tunisia (CLS) and Egypt (ALI). He is interested in Islamic jurisprudence and religious authority in the Muslim world. Though the immediate years after CASA are, as of yet, wide open, he would like to eventually pursue a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies.

Samantha Wray graduated with her M.S. in Human Language Technology from the University of Arizona in 2013. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Linguistics. She previously studied Arabic in Yemen and Morocco. She is interested in psycholinguistics, lexicography, corpus linguistics, Yemeni Arabic, and language games.