

STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE

, Chile, International Relations

The Politics of Resettlement: Assessing the Political Impact of Palestinians in Chile

Home to the largest population of Palestinians outside of the Middle East, Chile offers an excellent opportunity to examine and contextualize the debate surrounding Israel and Palestine; understand the broader effects of resettled populations on their host countries; and reimagine the nation as an inclusive rather than exclusive entity. With the support of a Fulbright, I propose to research the political ramifications of Palestinian resettlement to Chile as a member of the University of Chile's Center for Arabic Studies (CAS) Migration and Culture research team. My research will consider two major questions: What factors have contributed to the increasing support within the Chilean population and government for a Palestinian state? How and why have resettled Palestinians informed Chilean attitudes toward Israel and Palestine?

Palestinians arrived in Chile throughout the 19th and 20th centuries in search of relief from poverty and political upheaval. The most recent wave arrived in 2008 with the closing of the Al-Tanf refugee camp, formerly located in the desolate "no man's land" between Syria and Iraq. Though Arabs live throughout Latin America, many are highly assimilated Spanish speakers whose ancestors arrived several generations before. Chile is unusual in that it has continued to draw Palestinians to this day, resulting in a sizeable number of Arabic speakers who have spent much of their lives in the Middle East. Today, Chile's Palestinian population numbers roughly 500,000; Honduras' Palestinian population, the next largest in Latin America, is but half that size.

Few non-Arab states have opened their doors to Palestinians to this extent. Perhaps most curious, however, is the degree to which Chileans have become politically invested in the "Palestinian cause." Not only was Chile the only Latin American country to accept Al-Tanf refugees, but the Chilean government even agreed to help sponsor their resettlement. Throngs of Chileans waving Palestinian flags welcomed the 117 refugees, making headlines. This past January, Chile upgraded the Palestinian mission in Santiago to the level of embassy and formally recognized the Palestinian state. This level of cross-cultural political engagement is unusual in its pervasiveness, particularly considering Chile's cultural and geographic distance from Palestine.

Existing research largely focuses on the history and identity of Arabs in Latin America. Supported by this knowledge, I will consider the unexplored relationship between resettlement and politics through a case study of the Al-Tanf refugees, who have yet to be studied. Immigration and assimilation theories identify certain political, economic, and social factors as influences on the political reception of resettled peoples. In Chile, such factors may include whether a Palestinian lobby was responsible for Chile's resettlement sponsorship; the refugees' roles in the Chilean economy; to what extent Chile's history of exile under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet has informed Chilean attitudes toward displaced people; and religious identities (Chile has a Jewish minority of 75,000). I hope to identify which of these have been most prevalent in the formation of Chilean attitudes regarding Israel and Palestine.

The salience of my proposed research lies in its contextualization of the relationships between resettled populations and their hosts across the globe. As a student of Politics, Culture, and Identity at Brown University, I have spent the last four years questioning and investigating the formation of worldviews. How do we form cultures, and what determines our ability to rethink our own perspective on a given issue? Through my research, I hope to provide insight into the role that resettlement plays in a host country's domestic and international politics, as well as the manners in which opinions, beliefs, and attitudes—regarding newly resettled populations and the Israel-Palestine debate alike—are developed and transmitted. Understanding

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these relationships may shed light on the political, economic, and social circumstances that best allow resettled peoples to represent a positive presence within host countries—a question highly relevant to “melting pots” like the U.S.—and thus aid in identifying and creating welcoming homes for displaced people around the world.

The University of Chile has invited me to join its Migration and Culture faculty research team. I have also been in contact with Dr. Mai Kaileh, the first Palestinian full ambassador to Chile, who will connect me with members of the Palestinian Embassy, the Chilean government, and her extensive extended family. Academics in Chile, France, and the U.S. have put me in touch with politically active Palestinian youth, members of Chile’s Jewish population, and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) workers. Santiago’s well-established Palestinian community and student organizations—the Federación Palestina de Chile, the Union General de Estudiantes Palestinos, and the Fundación Palestina Belen—provide networks through which to meet experts and community members alike.

My research will take place between March and December of 2013 and will utilize this diverse plethora of contacts in an interview-based investigation of the Al-Tanf resettlement. During the first three months, I will conduct filmed interviews with Al-Tanf refugees in colloquial Palestinian Arabic, which I studied intensively in the West Bank and Damascus over the last two years. I will also create a diverse sample of Catholic and Jewish Chileans, whom I will interview in Spanish, a language that I have studied from a young age and developed through volunteer work in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Mexico. During the second three months, I will interview members of the Chilean government, the UNHCR’s Chilean branch, and La Vicaría Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores, the Chilean organization that helped resettle the Al-Tanf refugees. My interview questions will gauge respondents’ feelings toward a Palestinian state, opinions on Chilean foreign policy, exposure to resettled Palestinians, and understanding of Chile’s history under the Pinochet regime. I will compile personal narratives from a selection of those interviewed.

I will post select footage and corresponding commentary on a video blog throughout my stay, allowing me to refine video editing, writing, and translation skills that I will use to create a presentation of my work during my last three months in Chile. I will present my findings to both CAS and the extensive network of Brown University Watson Associates in the U.S.

I will supplement my interviews with coursework under Professor Eugenio Chahuán of CAS, whose interdisciplinary investigation of the demographic and cultural presence of Arabs in Chile will provide historical context for my research, as will background materials available through the CAS library. Professor Jaime Abedrabo of Diego Portales University has also invited me to audit his courses on Chilean Foreign Policy and Chile in the International System, which will help me to understand the relationship between public attitudes and Chilean foreign policy.

My research will not only expose me to the lives of multiple subpopulations within Chile, but will also encourage Chileans and Palestinians to reflect on one another’s presence, history, and culture. The interview-based analysis of identity formation and displacement that I conducted in the Golan Heights in 2009 has prepared me well for the sensitivities and obstacles associated with this type of research.

Political support within a host country for a resettled population is unusual. Chile, furthermore, represents a fortuitous intersection of my interests. Integrating myself into a society in which numerous political, religious, and ethnic identities interact will allow me to further develop the skills required for a career in cross-cultural relations and communication.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Chile, International Relations

I first learned about sweatshops when I was 15. I was shocked not only that my consumption could hurt someone my age halfway around the world, but that pervasive political, economic, and social inequalities made opting out of the system nearly impossible.

As a student, I found grassroots work to be the most accessible way of promoting a more ethical world, and I sought out opportunities to volunteer. An enduring interest in labor rights pushed me to join ten other high school students to work with recently deported migrant laborers in Tijuana, Mexico. Employing my classroom Spanish opened my eyes to the critical role direct communication plays in understanding others' perspectives and stories, and contextualizing my own worldview—initially tremendously uncomfortable—became an unshakable lens through which I continue to evaluate my perceptions and opinions to this day.

I quickly fell in love with international development work, and jumped on the opportunity to spend the summer after my first year of college designing and implementing a children's summer camp in the Dominican Republic's rural north. Never had I encountered such a challenge. The serious disconnect between the NGO's initiatives and the desires voiced by community members provided a first glance at obstacles to small-scale development, even when motivated by the best of intentions. In an effort to improve the flawed system, I coordinated Community Council Boards in five local towns in order to promote better organization and communication between volunteers and community members. My quick progress in Spanish left me eager to apply the fruitful technique of linguistic immersion to additional foreign tongues.

Back at Brown, I became interested in the Middle East through a series of excellent classes and exposure to the increasingly polemical media. In search of a study abroad experience that would offer maximum immersion and latitude, I opted to take a semester's leave of absence to study Arabic. During the first half of my 7-month stay in the Middle East, I worked with a Jerusalem-based NGO whose minimal guidance allowed me to independently design, conduct, and analyze interviews regarding identity formation and displacement within the Golan Heights' Druze population. I was honored to have my findings published last spring.

Hoping to further challenge my language skills, I moved to Syria. The independent nature of my semester allowed me to integrate myself into the vibrant local scene. I met my best Syrian friends practicing and performing the Brazilian martial art of Capoeira in refugee camps and prisons throughout the city; became close with my Syrian housemates; and joined the rather amusing legacy of expatriates recruited to act in Syrian soap operas. I returned to Syria the following summer as the Watson Institute's Marla Ruzicka Fellow to work with an American NGO that helps Iraqi refugees apply to American universities to complete their degrees interrupted by the war. As co-coordinator, I had to inform many students who had been accepted to American programs that their visa applications had been denied or that the university's funding had fallen short, forcing them to return to Baghdad during the war. Devastated by the systemic barriers to grassroots work in both Syria and the Dominican Republic, I returned to the U.S. determined to focus on combating the root causes of inequality and injustice.

This shift has been reflected in my coursework, career interests, and Fulbright proposal. I wish to pursue translation and writing as methods of influencing policy and fostering cross-cultural understanding. My proposed research aims to develop these skills while applying them to a specific investigation of how positive relationships between resettled populations and their hosts may thrive. It is my hope that my findings will help policymakers identify and nurture such circumstances elsewhere, benefitting displaced people and host countries around the world.

STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE

Taiwan, Ecology

Environmental Impacts of Taiwanese Tea Agriculture

"No, no, your Chinese is getting very good!" the tea shop keeper smiled, the crinkles around her eyes showing her genuine happiness. We both laughed, knowing that a native speaker insisting a foreigner's Chinese is "good" is the surest sign that improvement is needed. Regardless, I was pleased: although this conversation had hitches, it felt comfortable to chat idly about our lives and, of course, tea. The shopkeeper told stories ranging from the ancient legend of her "tea pet" statue to the recent industrial developments near her home in the southern tea-growing regions of China. It was in her shop that I began to think of tea as more than just my favorite beverage, but also as a connection to cultures worldwide and an international commodity.

After water, tea is the second most popular beverage in the world; its significance is not only cultural, but also economical. Although tea is not the largest agricultural product of Taiwan, many types of high quality teas are grown Taiwan's mountainous regions. In recent years, these gourmet teas have taken on an additional role of economic importance. The international sale of Taiwanese teas has become a high profile portion of the Taiwanese export economy following the country's accession into the WTO in 2001. However, despite the importance of and the increased demand for Taiwanese tea, information regarding the effects of tea farming on the local environment is hard to obtain and unreliable. Tea farming, like most forms of agriculture, can substantially alter the local environment. Agricultural activity in these mountainous regions increases soil erosion, pesticide exposure and nutrient pollution (when delicate ecosystem dynamics are disrupted due to fertilizer runoff.) Additionally, tea farms may alter the overall land surface through terracing and other cultivation methods that reduce habitat available for wild organisms. Given the significance of tea, it is essential to ensure that its cultivation can continue with minimal accumulation of negative environmental impacts for many future generations.

The Taiwanese government has promoted the adoption of reduced-impact farming methods, yet there is still a lack of studies that quantify the benefits of alternative agriculture techniques. Although the Taiwanese government sponsors tea-related research, it is focused on breeding and yield and does not cover environmental impacts. The few available independent studies suggest that environmental impacts may vary depending on methodology of cultivation, cultivation activities (e.g. replanting of shrubs) and location of the farms. But there has yet to be a systematic exploration to determine the varying extent to which tea production and different tea agricultural practices influence local environments. Better knowledge about the relative impacts of the various methods is essential to determine the most economically efficient and environmentally amenable agricultural techniques.

For my project, I will assess the environmental footprint of various tea agricultural practices on Taiwanese watersheds through quantitative sampling of soils, river sediments and river chemistry. I will work in the region of the Feitsuei reservoir, which is a major water source to the city of Taipei. Prior research in the region has found that tea plantations may have significant impacts on the watershed, but what managers on the farms can do to minimize these impacts, or impacts elsewhere, remains largely unexplored. Throughout my eight months in the region, I will work with the farmers to understand how they are using the land and which activities have the least detrimental impacts. By the end of my work, I aim to have identified the most effective low-impact techniques and start promoting wider adoption of these methods.

Furthermore, I aim to publish the results of my research and a review of other related research so that they are widely available and may be used throughout the country.

I have established a relationship with Dr. Shuh-Ji Kao, a research fellow with the Research Center for Environmental Changes with the renowned research institute Academia Sinica. Dr. Shuh-Ji Kao is the principal investigator of a premier biogeochemistry laboratory and has offered access to his laboratory resources and support for the fieldwork that will be necessary for my project. Dr. Kao's prior research has covered human impacts on erosion processes, and he has collaborated with international colleagues, including work specifically relating to the environmental impacts of tea farming. My project will coordinate well with his ongoing research in the Feitsuei region related to biogeochemistry, weathering and carbon cycling. I have also been in contact with Heather Fair, an American environmental scientist who specializes in agricultural research in east Asia, including tea farm studies in central Taiwan. With her contacts to other Taiwanese tea research groups, I will be able to access ongoing tea-related research data.

To begin my work in Taiwan, I will take intensive language classes at a Chinese Language Center at Cheng Keng Daxue (NCKU) in southern Taiwan starting in September 2012. I have applied to the Critical Language Enhancement Award to fund these studies. Although I have studied Chinese for several years, I will need advanced language skills in order to work effectively with Taiwanese researchers and with tea farmers. During this time, I will also collect and read the Taiwanese research publications on tea agriculture that have not been translated into English; I will connect with science researchers at NCKU who have worked on related projects to get their insight in planning my specific fieldwork; and I will begin to contact farmers who work in the region near the Feitsuei reservoir where I plan to focus my studies.

In March 2013, I will begin the bulk of my project: surveying important environmental characteristics that tea cultivation may influence. In order to form a comprehensive picture of these impacts, I aim to use well-established techniques to quantify variations in the environment. First, I will identify sites that are similar in as many ways as possible, (e.g. equivalent elevations and climate), yet have varying degrees and methods of agricultural usage (e.g. no farming, low-fertilizer farming, high-fertilizer farming). By choosing sites that only vary in agricultural practices, I will be able to attribute observed differences to the farming in the regions. At each of these sites I will measure river water quality (nutrient concentrations, pesticide contamination, sediment load) for 6 months. River water nutrient concentration and pesticide contamination can indicate levels of agricultural runoff while sediment load can indicate whether agricultural activity is increasing erosion. To complement this, I also plan to sample soils at each site to understand the abundance and the specific chemical forms of important nutrients, which may be altered by fertilizer application. If appropriate, I will use alternate methods, such as analysis of historical records of remotely-sensed data (satellite/aerial photographs) to quantify landslide rate (which may indicate slope stability) and productivity (which may indicate nutrient availability). I anticipate that I will adapt my specific sampling procedures to best suit the sites that I choose.

This research project not only aligns with my personal interests and will give me experience and connections for future research but it also will allow me a unique cultural experience. I look forward to this project's potential as a conduit for me to explore Taiwanese culture. Having realized that tea has held important roles in many societies for hundreds of years and is still an essential part of everyday life, I believe that it will be an interesting focal point for me to build relationships and cultural understanding. I hope to drink many cups of tea with farmers, researchers and other Taiwanese people, and that steeped in these personal conversations, I may better understand how the icon of tea is viewed in contemporary society.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Taiwan, Ecology

Can science find meaningful patterns in the apparent randomness of nature? I have struggled with this question, vacillating between confidence and skepticism. This past summer, I found myself standing in the incredibly diverse Puerto Rican forest and it seemed impossible to determine any principles governing the wildness around me. Yet I was there to do just that: collecting samples at this rainforest site for a scientific study to evaluate how bedrock influences ecosystems. Preliminary data from this site and others showed that bedrock significantly affects soil, which in turn affects plants and animals. But on that particular day, we realized that the underlying bedrock type was not what was previously thought. This error cast doubt on the previous conclusions. Did the “trends” in the data mean anything at all? Had we just noticed a random aberration in some numbers and, because we wanted to, called it an “explanation”?

Science isn’t all about data: it also relies on the creation and revision of theories. Carrying through these two components simultaneously allows progress towards an accurate and useful understanding of the natural world. I emphasized this fundamental philosophy of science as an undergraduate TA for Brown’s Principles of Ecology course. I often asked the question, “What is ecology?” My own best reply is, “it’s like economics for biology.” Ecology is the study of the interactions of organisms, finding ways to model and explain their relationships with their environments and with each other. But just as an economist might point out that “real world economics” often defy or are more complicated than the fundamental theory of supply and demand, ecological theories often fall short of predicting what actually happens in real ecosystems. Yet the value is in studying the “how” and “why” of these theory violations: from them we can begin to truly understand underlying mechanisms of these natural processes.

Coupling conceptual theory to reality is why I want to continue working in the field of environmental science for graduate school and beyond. While I enjoy pure intellectual challenges, once a subject moves into a practical reality, I truly begin to love it. For example, when I started taking Chinese classes, I relished the difficulty. But I really felt the value of my efforts once I brought my fledgling Chinese skills to the streets of Beijing and could converse with everyone from teachers to taxi drivers. Over the last few years I have found similar satisfaction while working on several environmental science research projects where I could apply concepts and techniques learned in classes to larger projects. Furthermore, I realized that my study of eastern Asia intersects with my interests in environmental science. These countries are in the process of rapid economic development, but they aim to do so in an environmentally sustainable way. Following my interests, I helped arrange and run a seminar class on the contemporary issues of China’s environment. Having spent much time in the classroom discussing these matters, I look forward to the opportunity to pursue my interests with hands-on environmental research in Taiwan. This project will be an excellent opportunity for me to gain experience in independent research in the field of my interests before I pursue a PhD in ecology.

Although I have learned some nuances of science research over the last few years, my most profound experiences have simply served confirm for me that scientific processes can make sense of our beautiful yet apparently random natural world. Because of our discovery that day in Puerto Rico, we re-examined our data. Reclassifying the site with the correct bedrock *improved* all of our previously observed trends. Not only did realizing the true rock type strengthen our conclusions, but for me, it substantiated the power of careful scientific methodology. As such, I hope to continue striving to build our understanding of the natural world throughout my life.

STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE

Denmark, Biology

Conflict & Cooperation in Social Insects

Domestication, warfare, division of labor, agriculture, policing, and slavery are the hallmarks of human civilization. Or are they? The wasps, ants, bees, and termites have for thousands of millennia exhibited characteristics that we humans boast as unique to our young species. These insect societies are so complex, in fact, that their social organization astounded the father of evolutionary biology Charles Darwin, and contemporary researchers remain in awe of these “superorganisms,” studying the evolution and adaptations of insect sociality. The Centre for Social Evolution (CSE) in Copenhagen has acted as the hub for such research. Under a Fulbright grant, I will enroll in graduate-level courses at the Centre and conduct conceptual research with Professor Jacobus Boomsma, the Centre’s director, focused on corrupt policing. Through this experience, I hope to build on my undergraduate research and prepare for my future career as a research scientist.

The CSE is a world-renowned institution for the study of eusociality – the highest level of social organization that describes the advanced social insects (termites, ants, etc.). Based at the University of Copenhagen, the Centre has published groundbreaking and important work since its inception in 2005. Researchers from the CSE study agriculture (ants and termites actually farm fungi), communication, and invasions, yet some of the most influential research has investigated how cooperation continues in societies consisting of selfish individuals. Although eusocial insects show virtually unparalleled cooperation, conflicts over resources and reproduction *do* exist and societies must bypass these to function smoothly. Some social species have evolved systems of policing or bullying to overcome these conflicts (like eating workers’ eggs to prevent competition with the queen’s offspring), and the efficiency of these solutions determines the degree of conflict and cooperation in the society.

As a student of evolution and social behavior, I’m excited at the opportunities and classes offered by the CSE. After earning my PhD, I plan to work as an academic, stretching our understanding of cooperation and social behaviors. The courses at the CSE will prepare me for such an endeavor. Unlike classes at other institutions, the courses at the Centre are built around social evolutionary theory, and I plan to enroll in four MSc classes, including Evolutionary Medicine and Invasive Biology. All of these courses treat traditional subjects with sociality in mind – Evolutionary Medicine, for example, teaches an approach to medicine built on two important social evolution theories (kin selection and offspring conflict). I also plan to register for the CSE’s specialized training courses, which provide students with otherwise inaccessible opportunities to plunge into the theory of sociality and study social interactions in the field.

As a supplement to my coursework, I will work with Professor Jacobus Boomsma on concept development. The goal of our research is to further pinpoint the factors that lead to cooperation in insect, and subsequently human, societies, and this research will be an extension of the work I’ve done over the last three years. In the summers of 2009 and 2010, I worked in a collective behavior lab at Princeton where we strove to understand 1) how schools of fish make decisions and 2) how predators influenced this behavior. This past summer, I conducted my own research at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory in Colorado studying social behaviors in burying beetles. These beetles represent a highly unusual intermediate between solitary and eusocial organisms because of the advanced cooperation they exhibit during parental care. The question that continually baffled me was, “Why do these beetles cooperate when they should be acting in their own interest?” and I ultimately discovered that though females often prefer to

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Denmark, Biology

parent alone, males “intrude” and stay. What seemed like cooperation was instead a complicated system of conflict and costs. This interaction of conflict and cooperation, and the search for the determinants of collaboration, provide the foundation for my project in Copenhagen.

Collective decisions in fish schools and cooperation in beetles, while impressive, lack the harmony of insect societies. With Professor Boomsma, I will study how this unity is sustained. An article published in the journal *Evolution* this past April declared that corruption maintains cooperation. In other words, cooperation blossoms if policers punish defaulting individuals, though the policers themselves can break the rules and receive a less severe punishment. For example, cooperation between workers should be maximized when policers devour the eggs of their sisters yet let their own eggs survive. The researchers related this assertion to insect and human societies, but their claim was model-based and lacking in empirical evidence. Professor Boomsma and I will test this hypothesis by conducting a literature review to see if it holds up across many social systems. We will focus on published data concerning the eusocial Hymenoptera (bees, wasps, termites, and ants), though we will also look to eusocial mammals (naked mole rats) and crustaceans (shrimp). Furthermore, we will examine policing in Boomsma’s own populations of fungus-farming ants and termites, focusing on how the behavior of policers deviates from that of workers. Ultimately, our goal is to either provide an empirical basis to the claims made (policers are corrupt) or to amend the models using our findings.

Because social behavior research looks to animals to make inferences about humans, this project’s significance comes from the answers it may provide about our own societies. Are we most cooperative when enforcers themselves can break the rules? At what point does corruption start to undermine the social structure? These are questions that this project can ultimately tackle.

In addition to housing the Centre for Social Evolution, Copenhagen hosts an exciting underground and comic art scene, and I hope to use this as a backdrop for a side project. In February of 2011, I created and published a whimsically illustrated glossary of evolution terms entitled *The Evolutionist’s Doodlebook*, and I am currently working on a second book of recently extinct megafauna (huge animals). While in Copenhagen, I hope to continue working on projects, possibly with an illustrated introduction to social behavior, and living in the city will expose me to an art community focused on inventive methods of expression and communication. At the forefront of this community stands the V1 Gallery, an art space that celebrates street, underground, and low-brow art. The city also hosts the popular biennial Copenhagen International Comic Festival, and last year, the University of Copenhagen led a conference on contemporary comics. Taking part in this community will also allow me to share my own scientific enthusiasm with other artists, exposing them to a new domain of communication.

Although English is widely spoken in Denmark, learning Danish will be a priority of mine in because it will allow me to more intimately experience Copenhagen. I’ve contacted Sprogcenter IA, a center for learning Danish located 3 km from the CSE, and they’ve informed me that as long as I’m a student at the University of Copenhagen, Danish classes are free. To prepare myself for these classes, I will start taking the “Dansk her og nu” online courses in April.

Denmark, and specifically Copenhagen, provides a quintessential setting for the next step in my intellectual journey. Taking classes and doing research at the CSE will allow me to build on the work I’ve done over the last three years and Copenhagen’s lively comic and illustrative art scene will help me pursue a side project exploring graphically and quirkily communicating science. In Copenhagen I will contribute and benefit both as a student and an artist.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

, Denmark, Biology

I recently found my fifth grade yearbook under a cabinet in my basement. Our teachers provided us with questions to describe ourselves, including “What would you change if you were principal?”, “what do you hope to do someday?”, and “in 20 years, I will be _____”. My replies were unique, yet repetitive. I wrote, “If I were principal, I would make zoology a class,” “I hope to someday be a famous zoologist,” and “In 20 years, I will be a zoologist.” As I got older, my career aspirations cycled through naturalist, wildlife illustrator, and zookeeper until I had my first college visit in 10th grade. I watched a professor explain his research, his projects, the books he published, and the students he supervised. I had never considered studying animals from an academic perspective, but afterwards I asked him about his life as a professor and he described to me his “hidden gem of a career.” From then on, I’ve worked towards being a zoology professor.

Within zoology, I am especially attracted to evolution and social behavior. I first learned about evolution from a videocassette during elementary school biology and the process seemed to me impossibly ingenious. A narrator explained that in very, very rare situations, a special force (mutations) granted lucky individuals structures that not only enhanced their survival but could also help transform one animal into an onslaught of new organisms. I was floored. I continued to read about animals, evolution, and evolutionary thought as I grew older, until my attraction to evolution extended to social behavior in my first year of college. I learned that somehow, intangible entities like nepotism and sociality had testable, adaptive significances and that behaviors like cooperation were encoded in genes. Not only did natural selection mold the stripes of zebras in a herd, but it contributed to how that herd came together, moved, and broke apart. Some organisms evolved spiteful behaviors but others became cooperative, forming societies more advanced than modern human cities.

Because I find evolution completely enthralling, I’m often surprised to find that others treat the subject with ignorance and even dismay. For this reason, I published *The Evolutionist’s Doodlebook* in February, 2011. An illustrated glossary, the book paired traditional concepts of evolution, like natural selection, extinction, and Dollo’s Law (evolution is irreversible), with my own whimsical illustrations. Through the book, I strove not only to define forty terms of evolution, but also to graphically showcase this paradoxically fantastic science, a subject where rigorous rationality and magical imagination most flourish. I first began to see the book’s effects this past summer. I was conducting independent research at a laboratory in Colorado, and the lab decided to sell my book in the store. Those who read it – students, professors, and even tourists – complimented me on the book’s imagination, appreciating how it showed a more playful side of the science. A teacher from New York even decided to stock her biology classroom with 23 copies of the book.

I first became fascinated with Scandinavia last summer. After working with fish schools at Princeton, I flew to Tromsø in northern Norway and lived on a nearby organic strawberry farm. I chose to work in Norway for the same reason that I chose to attend Brown – both ranked high in sustainability, modernity, and happiness – and after only 6 weeks in the country, I began learning more about the countries that comprise Scandinavia. I read Ibsen, Hamsun, and even Jason, a Norwegian cartoonist, and when I arrived at Brown, I studied Scandinavian literature, art, and film. I read authors ranging from Kierkegaard to Tove Jansson, the author of the *Moomin* series. As I delved further into Scandinavian culture, I noticed themes persistently returning – contemplation, an appreciation of nature, a joyous yet clean take on life – and I longed to return.