



2019-2020

# NEXT STEPS

The Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences is proud to celebrate another group of outstanding undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars as they take their “next steps.” Finishing Caltech’s requirements, presenting a thesis, defending a dissertation, and forging ahead with research in the time of COVID-19 required focus, grit, and, above all, perseverance. Please join us in saluting this cohort’s resilience and wishing each of its members well as they follow their dreams beyond Caltech.

As a postdoctoral scholar in neuroscience in the O’Doherty lab, Colas (PhD ’18, computation and neural systems) focused on developing methods for the analysis of high-resolution fMRI in which resolution of images was increased by more than a factor of 10, in an attempt to distinguish the functions of distinct but spatially overlapping circuits deep in the brain. He is now a postdoctoral researcher at UC Santa Barbara.

## JARON COLAS

*Postdoctoral Researcher,  
Department of Psychological and  
Brain Sciences, UC Santa Barbara*



## ZHONGZHENG (BROOKS) FU

*Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center*

Fu (PhD ’19, control and dynamical systems) was a postdoctoral scholar in computational affective neuroscience in the Adolphs lab, where he worked on recording single-unit brain activity in patients with epilepsy. Since his departure earlier this year, he is continuing his research into understanding the mechanisms of decision-making and learning in humans as a visiting postdoctoral fellow at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

## BOWEN FUNG

*Research Advisor, Behavioural Insights Team*

A former postdoctoral scholar in neuroscience, Fung was a member of the Mobbs lab and also collaborated with the Camerer lab. He conducted studies on the theoretical and neurobiological basis of decision-making, emotion, reward, and social valuation in healthy populations. His research focused on using behavioral and fMRI experiments to model the mechanisms underlying frustration, fear, and anxiety. He is now a research advisor for Behavioural Insights Team in Sydney, Australia.



## JEONGBIN KIM

*Research Assistant Professor, Centre for Behavioural Economics,  
National University of Singapore Business School*

Kim is a postdoctoral scholar in economics whose research interests include experimental economics, behavioral economics, microeconomic theory, and political economy. At Caltech, he has worked with faculty in the Center for Theoretical and Experimental Social Sciences (CTESS). He starts his new position as a research assistant professor in the Centre for Behavioural Economics at the National University of Singapore Business School in the fall.



## SEO-YOUNG SILVIA KIM

*Assistant Professor, Department of Government, School of Public Affairs,  
American University*

Kim graduates this month after defending her thesis, *Three Essays in the Dynamics of Political Behavior and Political Data*, with Jonathan Katz as her advisor. Her research interests are American politics and political methodology, and she was the recipient of the 2019–2020 Lance E. Davis Fellowship. She looks forward to starting her new position as an assistant professor in the department of government at American University in Washington, D.C., this August.





## VADIM MARTYNOV

*Quantitative Researcher, Citadel*

During his final year in the HSS Social Sciences PhD program, Martynov (MS '17, social science) received a 2019 Repetto-Figueroa Family Graduate Fellowship, and he completed his dissertation, *Essays on Social Learning and Networks*, with Omer Tamuz as his advisor. His research is in microeconomic theory, with a particular emphasis on social learning, networks, and game theory. He will be a quantitative researcher at Citadel in New York.

## SONG QI

*Postdoctoral Scholar in Affective Neuroscience, Caltech*

Qi joined the division as a third-year graduate student, and he received the 2016–2017 Davidson Psychobiology Fellowship and the 2018–2019 Lipper Graduate Fellowship. After defending his thesis, *Decision Making Under Threat: An Ecological Framework*, in July 2019 with Dean Mobbs as his advisor, Qi became a postdoctoral scholar in affective neuroscience in the Mobbs lab. There, he continues to explore the neural mechanisms underlying fear, anxiety, and decision-making.



## ALEJANDRO ROBINSON-CORTÉS

*Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Exeter Business School*

Robinson-Cortés received his PhD this month after completing his dissertation, *Essays on Market Design and Industrial Organization*, with Matthew Shum as his advisor. He will start his new position as a lecturer in the department of economics at the University of Exeter Business School in the United Kingdom this fall. As a graduate student at Caltech, he received the 2017 John O. Ledyard Prize for best third-year paper in HSS and a 2019 Lance E. Davis Fellowship.



## MELANIE MASTERTON SHERAZI

*Terra Foundation Affiliated Fellow, American Academy in Rome*

As the Howard E. and Susanne C. Jessen Postdoctoral Instructor in the Humanities, Sherazi taught several undergraduate courses focused on American and African literature and visual culture. In January, she began a six-month Terra Foundation Affiliated Fellowship in residence at the American Academy in Rome, with plans to complete her manuscript, *Black Mediterranean Forms: Desegregationist and Antifascist Aesthetics in Cold War Rome*.



## CLASS OF 2020

Among the seniors expected to graduate in June, 8.5% (19 out of 223) are completing an option (major) or minor in the humanities or social sciences. Fourteen students selected one of our tracks for their second option (double major): seven in Business, Economics, and Management (BEM); five in History; and two in Economics. And five students completed a humanities minor: four in English, and one in Philosophy.

These students, too, are taking impressive next steps.

Two are joining Facebook and Google as software engineers.

And several others are pursuing advanced degrees, including in:

- mathematics at New York University's Courant Institute
- ecology and evolutionary biology at Indiana University Bloomington
- statistics at Stanford University
- materials science and engineering at Stanford University
- physics at Harvard University with a secondary concentration in archaeology
- astronomy at Columbia University