and the larger feminist movement, they feel incomplete. Women had been talking about their political rights long *before* the Civil War, alongside discussions about the abolition of slavery and other movements that eventually transformed society. A broader sketch of the economic history of the United States and Europe during this period, including industrialization and the rise of wage labor, might provide a richer explanation for the conditions that shaped the minds of suffragists, and made women's liberation possible.

But the book does not attempt to be a definitive or intellectual history of suffragism. It is a focused, slim volume that allows Ware to zoom in on the lives of her suffragists; within their vivid stories are many surprises about what kinds of women were demanding the vote, and why. The earliest states to grant women suffrage were not on the East Coast, but those on the Western frontier: Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and Idaho. Emmeline B. Wells, a prominent, early Mormon suffragist, was nevertheless excluded from leadership roles in the movement because she was the seventh wife of a polygamous husband; Mormon women's activism, Ware writes, "was quickly forgotten."

Ware's analysis recognizes that gender is so complex, so entangled with the structure of society, that it's impossible to exclude women who participate in patriarchy from an honest feminist history. Her effort to dust off these stories provides a messier, sometimes troubling, and more convincing picture of some of the women who changed the world.

HM Explore More

For more online-only articles on the arts and creativity, see:

Min Jin Lee on Her New Novel and Writing about the Korean Diaspora

ELLA RINALDO

"I worry a great deal about how Koreans are perceived," the author and current Radcliffe fellow says.

harvardmag.com/min-jin-lee-19

ALUMNI

"Doctor Bugs"

Naturalist Mark W. Moffett investigates insects—and now, evolving human societies.

by NELL PORTER BROWN

TROMPING THROUGH a Peruvian rainforest looking for ants, Mark W. Moffett, Ph.D. '87, accidentally sat on a deadly fer-de-lance pit viper. In Sri Lanka, Kenya, and India, he barely escaped stampeding elephants. Then there was the time in Colombia, while tracking the world's most toxic frog (*Phyllobates terribilis*), that Moffett ended up armed with a poisonous tribal blow gun in a stand-off against drug smugglers. "Well, it's a long story," he says, nearly chuckling at the memory. "Eventually, a military escort pulled us out and got us to the airport."

By rights, the enterprising tropical biologist, a former graduate student of Pellegrino University Professor emeritus E. O. Wilson, should be dead. Many times over. Instead, his energy and oddly wide-eyed innocence have backstopped an eclectic career as an award-winning explorer, speaker, writer, and photojournalist. He travels at a moment's notice, beholden to no one and nothing except his own desire to get up close to the creatures he loves—primarily insects and amphibians.

Moffett—who has trekked across the globe in search of unusual creatures—with an ant's nest in Australia

"The thing that one misses most from growing up," he says from his modest house on Long Island, "is the experience of discovery. As a child, everything is new—all the time. I think people run out of steam for life because they lose this. But if you're in a jungle, or someplace you've never been or heard of....?" He stares off dreamily. "Like the time I was in Sri Lanka and something fell on me from the tree above, and I had no idea what this thing was. It was marching along my arm, with long legs. Its body was nearly spherical with a little turret on top, onto which all its eyes were aggregated. Some people might have reacted with fear. But I'm going, 'Wow!'"

He eventually learned it was a type of parasitic fly that lives on bats. "But," he

Photographs courtesy of Mark W. Moffett

adds, "the *not* knowing? I mean, we're continuously surrounded by experts telling us the names of everything *all the time.* But turn off the constant narration? Then you find that everywhere you look, you're discovering things, and going into this zone where you're seeing every single little thing that occurs. Like the behaviors of this fly. Or of ants."

Those "little things" are captured by his more than 500 photographs in *National Geographic*. He's also given countless lectures and written 120 scientific journal and magazine articles chronicling his exploits and biological observations during the last 30 years. A few of those years were spent scaling the tallest trees in more than 40 countries to examine orchids, bats, orangutans, and other canopy-dwelling creatures for his first book, *The High Frontier: Exploring the Tropical Rainforest Canopy* (1993). *Face to Face with Frogs* (2008) also featured his photographs, as did the fascinating and critically acclaimed *Adventures among Ants: A Global Safari with a Cast of Trillions* (2010). Moffett built on that knowledge for his newest book, *The Human Swarm: How Societies Arise, Thrive, and Fail*

Overseer and HAA Director Candidates

This spring, alumni can vote—using either a new online balloting site or the traditional paper, mail-in, ballot—for new Harvard Overseers and Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) elected directors. Email notifications about the new electronic-voting option and website link were sent April 3, when the paper ballots were also mailed. Votes must be received by 5 p.m. EDT on May 21 to be counted. All holders of Harvard degrees, except Corporation members and officers of instruction and government, are entitled to vote for Overseer candidates. The election for HAA directors is open to all Harvard degree-holders.

The HAA Nominating Committee has proposed the following candidates in 2019.*

For Overseer (six-year term):

Danguole Spakevicius Altman '81, Houston. Founder, Vapogenix Inc.

Alice Hm Chen, M.P.H. '01, Berkeley. Chief medical officer and deputy director, San Francisco Health Network

Scott C. Collins '87, J.D. '90, Boston. Managing director and COO, Summit Partners

Janet Echelman '87, Brookline, Massachusetts. Visual artist, Studio Echelman

Vivian Hunt '89, M.B.A. '95, D.B.E., London. Managing partner, U.K. and Ireland, McKinsey & Company, Inc.

Tyler Jacks '83, Cambridge. Director, Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

John B. King Jr. '96 ('95), Washington, D.C. President and CEO, The Education Trust

Reshma Saujani, M.P.P. '99, New York City. Founder and CEO, Girls Who Code

Ryan Wise, Ed.L.D. '13, Des Moines. Director, Iowa Department of Education

For elected director (three-year term)

George C. Alex '81, Cohasset, Massachusetts. CEO, Twin Oaks Capital

Bryan C. Barnhill II '08, Detroit. City manager, City Solutions, Ford Smart Mobility

Ethel Billie Branch '01, J.D.-M.P.P '08, Window Rock, Arizona. Attorney general, The Navajo Nation

Salomé Cisnal de Ugarte, LL.M. '94, Brussels. Managing partner, Hogan Lovells

Adrienne E. Dominguez '90, Dallas. Partner, intellectual property, Thompson & Knight LLP

Michael J. Gaw '90, Alexandria, Virginia. Assistant director, division of trading and markets, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

Christina Lewis '02, New York City. Founder and CEO, All Star Code

Zandile H. Moyo '00, Indian Springs, Alabama. Consultant, strategy and financial advisory services

Derek C.M. van Bever, M.B.A. '88, M.Div. '11, Cambridge. Senior lecturer and director of the Forum for Growth & Innovation, Harvard Business School

*The HAA Nominating Committee has nominated nine candidates for Overseer, rather than the usual eight. This reflects an additional vacancy on the board created by the departure of James Hildreth '79, who has stepped down in light of other professional obligations.


George C. Alex


Bryan C. Barnhill II


Ethel Billie Branch


Salomé Cisnal de Ugarte


Adrienne E. Dominguez


Michael J. Gaw


Christina Lewis


Zandile H. Moyo


Derek C.M. van Bever


Danguole Spakevicius Altman


Alice Hm Chen


Scott C. Collins


Janet Echelman


Vivian Hunt


Tyler Jacks


John B. King Jr.


Reshma Saujani


Ryan Wise

(Basic Books), which was published in April.

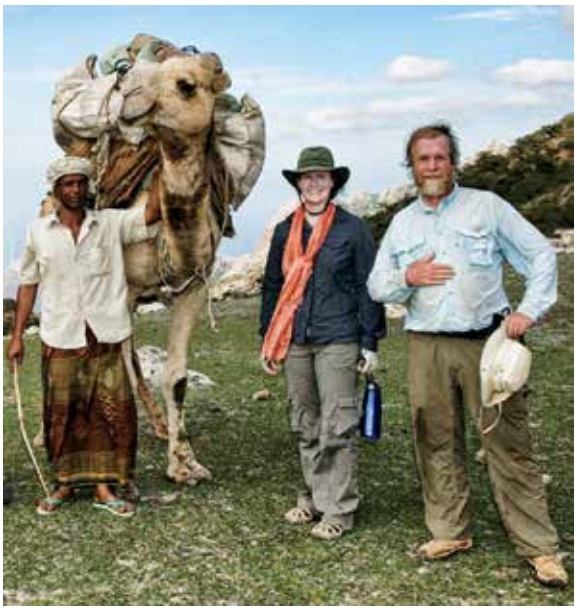
These efforts have earned him, among other honors, the Explorer Club's Lowell Thomas Medal, and the respect of his mentor Wilson, the pioneering sociobiologist and fellow ant-lover. Wilson knew Moffett was "something special from the start...a rare born naturalist," he told *Smithsonian* for a 2009 article about Moffett and an exhibit of his images, "Farmers, Warriors, Builders: The Hidden Life of Ants," at the National Museum of Natural History. "But Wilson declines to revel in his former student's success," the article continues. "'Mark is Mark,' Wilson reflects. 'He just developed on his own.'"

Promoting himself as Doctor Bugs (his website domain name), Moffett often entertains to educate. He has starred in National Geographic videos, memorably a 2011 segment on weaver ants—he ate their larvae, served on Ritz crackers, at Angkor Wat—and been a hit with talk shows, including *The Colbert Report, Late Night with Conan O'Brien* '85, and several on NPR. Moffett believes in "exercising" his brain: improvisational acting classes, reading and writing poetry, and performing stand-up comedy on open mic nights all help serve his ultimate aim—storytelling. "Human life is about narratives," he says, and humor "isn't used enough by scientists—much of the messaging is serious and dry. People are more driven to love nature, and want to save it, with messages that strike their positive emotions. Think of today's politics."

These identities, based on markers ranging from clothing and accents to occupations and ethnicities, enable humans, he says, to immediately determine whether another human belongs—and then, potentially, to move beyond that single critical factor.

"The seemingly trivial act of entering a café full of strangers without a care in the world is one of our species' most underappreciated accomplishments," he writes, "and it separates humankind from most other vertebrates living in societies." It's what has enabled humans to form nation states, as opposed to the 200-member (at maximum) societies of most vertebrate species (where members need to know each other personally) and to incorporate strangers and,in time, a great deal of diversity, he explains. "Nations would not have taken hold without people repurposing their cognitive survival tools to take in, and adjust to, different ethnic groups."

As Moffett clarifies in his introduction, "Readers of every political persuasion will find both good and bad news in the current science." In person, he further notes that, in evolutionary terms, all societies and their "treasured identities" are ultimately ephemeral constructs, however much people cling to those markers. "Because America is a country of immigrants—Native Americans being a tiny portion of the population—it doesn't have the natural break-lines of past state societies, which would typically fragment into regions originally occupied by different ethnic groups. The admixture of peoples across the landscape, and the varied ideas they bring," he continues, "are both the strength and the weakness of America. We can draw from this diversity to build ourselves up collectively and, in times when people feel threatened, rebel against it to tear ourselves down. Obviously, the latter reflects our current situation."



An intrepid pair: Moffett and his wife, Melissa Wells, traveling in Yemen

People are more motivated to save nature by "messages that strike their positive emotions."

And Moffett's sometimes goofy presentation doesn't negate a serious side, as *The Human Swarm* reveals. Suspending photography and far-flung travels to hole up in his home office, "getting by on the fumes from the advance," he took more than five years to write this sweeping examination of what enables human civilization to function (or not). The book draws on past and current research from philosophy, anthropology, psychology, and biology, along with his own studies of ant and other animal societies. Moffett looks at traditional theories of how and why human societies evolved—because *Homo sapiens* can deliberate, coordinate, and collaborate—and proposes an even more fundamental reason: humans' distinctive manner of establishing identities.

Moffett's focus on who, or what, "belongs" began with the ants crawling through the backyard of his boyhood home in Colorado. The ones he befriended as an introverted, reclusive child. His family later moved to Wisconsin, where, at age 12, he joined the state herpetological society, and easily communed with adult scientists. High school felt limiting, so he left, and then began helping on research conducted by professors in the biology department at Beloit College (where his father was a career counselor).

At 16, he joined a summer expedition to a Costa Rican rainforest as resident snake-wrangler. "The team had me stand in a stream in the dark while they used a long, cut-off branch to hook a green tree snake that was looped around the twigs of a tree overhead," he recalls. "The snake went twirling through the air in the headlight beams and I remember thinking, 'Didn't they say this species is rear-fanged?' and wondering what that meant as it fell into my hands. Luckily 'rear-fanged' in this case meant having a bite like a bee sting."

The lack of a high-school diploma didn't keep Moffett, a fierce autodidact who swears he's never taken a course in entomology, from attending Beloit and graduating Phi Beta Kappa, with a degree in biology, in 1979.

During his senior year, long entranced by *The Insect Societies*, E.O. Wilson's seminal 1971 text, he simply wrote the professor, who invited him to visit. As Moffett remembers it, the two men were quickly down on Wilson's floor among opened books and speci-

Marveling at Angkor Wat, the famous temple complex in Cambodia

mens. (The Museum of Comparative Zoology [MCZ] holds close to a million ants, the largest collection in the world.) That led to Moffett's tenure as a graduate student in the department of organismic and evolutionary biology under Wilson's tutelage. There his research took off, literally. Rummaging through the MCZ's specimen drawers, he "struck gold" with a case of marauder ants. He was excited by the species' dramatic polymorphism—the varying sizes and shapes enabling them to perform diverse tasks in a complex society, which hadn't been adequately studied—and quickly proposed that as his research subject.

Stretching National Geographic funds to study in 11 Asian countries, Moffett spent 29 straight months in the field, far longer than usually allowed. "I guess in that sense Ed did let me do what I wanted, but only because I kept writing to let him know I was on the right track," Moffett explains. "Actually, I would often write him in a panic about all my difficulties—and in the month it took his return letter to arrive, I would have solved most of the problems myself, which I think was good for me."

Before leaving, knowing he'd have to document the creatures he found, Moffett taught himself photography. And then, while traveling in India, he mailed his first six rolls of film to *National Geographic*, where the pictures landed with an appreciative editor; in 1986 his stunning images were published with a feature on those marauder ants, thereby launching his 30-year career as an ecological photojournalist. He traveled and worked for the magazine through the 1990s (and beyond) while he continued as MCZ research associate and associate curator of the ant collection. He was next a visiting scholar at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1998 to 2006, before moving back east, and becoming an entomology research associate at the Smithsonian, and later in human evolutionary biology at Harvard.

Moffett's photojournalistic and other achievements are due less to any love of the medium ("I don't care about photography except when it's useful to the story I'm telling") than to his ability to ignore or, more accurately, hardly notice conditions that others find inviable or repellent: stiflingly hot, wet jungles; months of subsistence-based, nomadic camping and trekking or bushwhack-

The Director's Half-Decade

With The Harvard Campaign concluded and a new University president in office, the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) has pivoted to take on new challenges and priorities. The organization is charged with engaging a wildly diverse cohort of 371,000 alumni worldwide. Starting with the class of 2022, notes executive director Philip Lovejoy, who has led the association for five years, essentially all current undergraduates were born within the new millennium—yet "then there are the folks coming back for their seventieth reunion, who were born in the 'Roaring Twenties.'" Few organizations serve people "aged 19 to 109," he adds: "That's why it's so important that we embrace our traditions and build upon past generations. But we also always have to look to where we're going and what the needs are going to be, because there's no question that society is going through radical transformations." The HAA can play a very important role, as it always has, "to bring alumni together for the good of the institution and society."

A new online balloting option launched in April for this year's elections of Overseers and HAA elected directors (see page 76) is one tangible way to better reach that broad group, especially the more than 59,000 alumni outside the United States. "The alumni voice in the governance of this University is what has always made us better and better, right?" says Lovejoy. "They challenge, they question, they oversee, and they push. They keep us honest. So, it is important, and I hope that the advent of online voting will provide greater access to the elections so the alumni voice is heard."

To increase opportunities for personal contact, the HAA has proposed establishing a Crimson Society, an annual program for the post-fifty-fifth reunion classes that will *not* supplant the traditional quinquennial reunions. Meanwhile, to streamline reunion operations in general and potentially enable all reunioners to attend Commencement week events and commune with members of other classes, the HAA is also preparing to move all reunions to the spring. The process will start with the thirtieth reunion this May.

How best to engage and support alumni and alumni volunteers is a constant subject of exploration, Lovejoy says. Harvard clubs emerged in the nineteenth century, when alumni began moving beyond the Greater Boston area; they remain vital as geographically based, membership-dependent entities. But given digital communication and the changing needs of mobile alumni, he adds, the now nearly 200 domestic and international clubs are "not the only way people want to connect anymore. Enter SIGs"—shared-interest groups, the most rapidly growing alumni affiliates.

SIGs, which the HAA formally recognized in 2004, evolved from existing grass-roots, self-governing alumni groups, like the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus and the Black Alumni Society. Today there are more than 50 SIGs, ranging from Harvard Alumni in Animal Health, Harvard Veterans Alumni Organization, and Harvard University Muslim Alumni to Harvardwood, Harvard Alumni for Global Women's Empowerment, and Harvard Alumni in

ing—through swamps, deserts, and mountains, at times getting completely lost. And, an essential intimacy with scorpions, spiders, biting ants, leeches, and parasitic botflies. (The botfly species *Dermatobia hominis* can deposit larvae under human skin; a 2010 video, shot at Harvard and now available on YouTube, shows a botfly maggot emerging from Moffett's hand, 10 weeks after the eggs were laid in Belize.) He can also sit still anywhere for as long as it takes to get what he wants. Once, documenting a beetle for a researcher in South America, he watched and waited, jotting down notes: "It's moved an inch. And its antenna is drooping." Eventually, "it moved and found its burrow," he adds, which "made for an exciting conclusion to the story." But it did take 10 hours.

Alone in a jungle, he feels content, alive. "Those times you're there for days, not moving...Turning the brain off is the most bizarre, wonderful thing," he reports. "It's the true creative time, the empty time when the mind has a chance to wander. There's not enough of that anymore." There's no shame in his conceding, "I'm not always good with reality," or with quotidian tasks or financial planning. His wife, Melissa W. Wells, "tells people I should wear a medical-alert bracelet that explains that it's normal for me not to know what day or year it is, let alone when exactly things happened in the past," he adds. "It seems I live in the present tense."

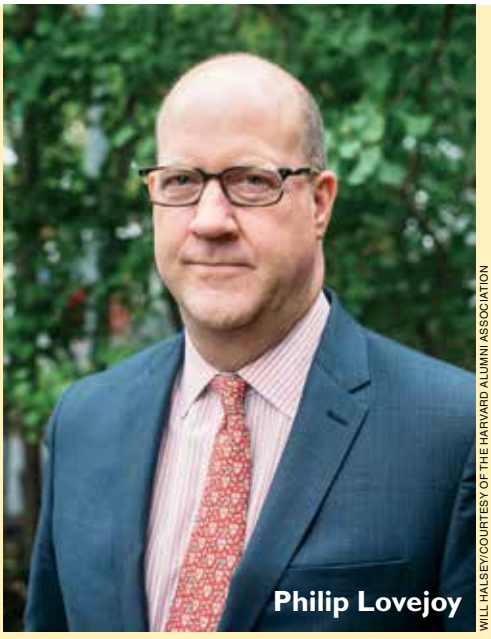
Moffett and Wells, a healthcare consultant, married in 2008—both happily barely clad in furs, feathers, and body paint during a Rapa Nui-style ceremony beside the Rano Kau volcano on Easter Island; she shares his passion for adventuring. With the publication of *The Human Swarm*, Moffett has talks planned, including at the Smithsonian, The Explorers Club, the World Science Festival, and on May 2 at Harvard. But after that, he must get moving. "Frankly, it's been too many years in New York; the longest I've lived in one place," he notes. "Melissa and I keep talking about Singapore as a base of operations in Asia. Or Botswana. Or Venezuela, if that country ever stabilizes. If you think Caracas sounds wild, you should visit its rainforest. Life is too short to miss such things!"

During a research trip, Moffett and Wells got married on Easter Island. The governor arranged "for a traditional ceremony," Moffett says. "We had no idea what we were getting into. They stripped us down at the edge of the Rano Kau volcano. Everyone on the expedition had an amazing time."

Food and Wine; Harvard Impact Alliance, a multi-sector approach to social change, is among the newest.

"Right now we're doing an incredibly cool project" with the First Generation Harvard Alumni SIG, says Lovejoy: a "red book" of more than 100 personal essays. The volume represents the first non-class-specific "class report," and will be printed and distributed early this summer; the HAA will mail free copies to participants, to that SIG's members, and to incoming first-gen College students.

Among the HAA's "biggest strategic imperatives in the coming years," Lovejoy continues, is figuring out how to move beyond geographic barriers to better integrate alumni. How, he asks, can we best "connect everybody in Chicago, for example, who is getting together around Harvard in some capacity…the people in the entrepreneur SIG, the Harvard Club of Chicago, the Business School Club of Chicago, the class of '87?" The clubs' roles may evolve, too: "Many find that they're challenged by memberships, so we really want to look at this concept. What does membership mean today? Are paid membership models right?" SIGs might supply the "content stream" for clubs, he says, but the local, face-to-face, personal meetings are still "the richest way to get together—and people want those."



Philip Lovejoy

WILL HALSEY/COURTESY OF THE HARVARD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

He's wary of perpetuating any perceptions of exclusivity. During the last five years, he says, the association has become "much more open and responsive," with strong working relationships among colleagues and alumni leaders across Harvard, pursuing a common goal: "How do we empower and strengthen our alumni to be strong citizens of Harvard? What do *we* need to do to do that?"

"We need to make sure that it's a place everybody is welcome and feels they belong," he continues. "So, consistent with the presidential task force on inclusion and belonging [see harvardmag.com/diversity-report-18], we're doing a lot of work on that within our volunteer groups, and also within the staff organization."

As the HAA faces these and other new imperatives, Lovejoy will continue to travel and meet with alumni. "The depth of commitment and love for this institution by our alumni is profound," he says. "And we rely heavily on our volunteers to really create these communities, build the connections, to care, to participate. It's an incredible privilege to be trying to steer this ship."

—NELL PORTER BROWN