

Some say *data is the new oil*, but we're not convinced.
Potatoes cooked in data taste like crap.

Over the past year, we have seen big data and analytics as a driving force in many aspects of our lives. So we decided to apply this powerful tool to our holiday letter! We ran deep learning algorithms and extensive analytics on the last 20 years of Lefton-Steinbart holiday letters. Leveraging cloud infrastructure, we did a full internet search of all social media posts and web pages that include the words Lefton or Steinbart or Holiday or Letter. More data, better results, right? Here's one interesting fact, the word "Enid" is far more likely to occur in a Lefton-Steinbart holiday letter than it is to appear in a police report. Surprised? We were!

*We also collected a trove of publicly available personal data about **you** (there's a lot). We then used this data to hack into all of your devices and accounts (side note: 'password123' is a really bad password). But don't worry, we're not out to harm you; we just want deliver a better product. The end result is that you are now enjoying a highly personalized holiday letter experience that meets all of your needs. Did you know that people who read and enjoy this Holiday Letter also liked the [2017 Lefton-Steinbart Holiday Letter](#)? It's all clear once you look at the data. The answer is the data, the data is the answer, and this is the*

2018 Lefton-Steinbart Holiday Letter

Hannah's still in Senegal, finishing her 27 month Peace Corps volunteer service later this year. She's loving it, and she greets you. In addition to the health work she's doing in her village (e.g. creating cool camps to empower young women), she's taken on leadership roles in the PCV community there (e.g. president of their peer support network). Her next stage will depend on the outcome of several applications she's recently submitted. She has requested to extend her stay for a third year where she would move from her village to an apartment in a larger city, and she would be doing more administrative work for Peace Corps Senegal. She's also applied to 8 top tier graduate programs for a four-year joint degree program in law and social work (and has already been admitted to many of them!). Her plan is to pursue the JD/MSW option regardless, but it may require deferred enrollment if she stays in Senegal an additional year. Hannah enjoys eating yummy Senegalese dishes and discovering more uses of moringa. Her care packages are typically > 50% peanut butter by weight.

Google Maps showed a great deal of travel for Hannah, Natalie, and Monica this year. All three sisters converged on Israel in summer 2018 for a Birthright trip. They visited Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, and Haifa among other sites. It was a great experience, and Enid and Lew liked the fact that they made all their arrangements and paid for the travel themselves! Monica and Natalie tacked on an extra day in New York City on their way home. Other destinations included Hannah's visit to Morocco where she connected with Lew's sisters Linda and Charna as part of their big African adventure. Monica flew to Indianapolis to see friends, and Natalie went to Puerto Rico and Mexico for service trips. Future travel is strongly indicated, and all three of them have only a 0.01% chance of becoming a hermit.

Natalie graduated in the spring with her BS in Chemical Engineering from Georgia Tech, and Lew and Enid got to be onstage when she got her diploma. She applied and was accepted into many of the top Chemical Engineering PhD programs. She took a lot of trips to check them out. This fall she started graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley. Lew went out with her to do some house-hunting, and Enid moved her into a cute one bedroom apartment with a monthly rent which is pretty close to 50% of Hannah's current annual salary. Granted, Peace Corps volunteers don't make a lot of money, and the real estate market in the Bay Area is insane, but you gotta admit that's a fun datum. Thanks to the lateness of this letter, we are happy to share that Natalie passed all her preliminary exams in January 2019 and has selected an advisor. She's now expecting to spend over 27% of her next few years in the lab. She's also had a chance to visit a couple National Parks. Before she left town, she enjoyed seeing the MLS All-Star game with Monica, Enid and Lew in the new Mercedes Benz stadium, where the Atlanta United soccer team plays.

Monica graduated from Emory University with a BA in English, and literally started a full time job the next day. She was hired into a Fellowship at the PR firm Fleishman Hillard and works in their health care practice.

Later in the year, after her fellowship ended, they offered her a permanent position as an Associate Account Executive. She saved up money by living at home for several months, and she has now moved into an apartment in Midtown Atlanta (closer to work) with a longtime friend as her roommate. During her last semester of college, she continued to write for the Emory Wheel. For one of her stories, she lived an entire week trying to create zero-waste. She also spent some time working remotely writing for an eco-travel company. For fun, Monica took advantage of the Atlanta concert scene, going to Music Midtown, seeing Lorde, Haim, Bishop Briggs, and enjoying comedians like Issa Rae and Jessica Williams. Currently, her podcast to documentary ratio hovers slightly above 1.

Madison and Bo are both still alive (!) and relatively healthy, much to the disappointment of Bo and Madison, respectively. Madison has lost a lot of her hearing, some of her eyesight, and has a bit of a limp. Lew and Enid are able to empathize. Bo lives every day like it's your last. Your last, not his. The pets are part of our family, but we drew the line and didn't buy seats for them when we went to see *Hamilton* at the Fox Theater.

Enid and Lew did a bit of traveling this year, too. They enjoyed some time in Albuquerque this summer which was tacked onto a conference Lew had in Santa Fe. There they were lucky to not only see Lew's sisters, Linda and Charna, but also caught up with cousins, Hal and Judi. Enid and Lew enjoyed time in Santa Clara, CA where they got to be a part of the 60th birthday blowout in honor of Lew's sister Irene. There was a photo booth and an open bar. Now that's the way to make memories! They also took a trip by themselves (gasp!) to Memphis, just for fun (and some civil rights history). This past year there were also 172.5 people who came to visit us, counting UPS and FedEx drivers. Nice meals (from Waffle House to top-tier tapas) and great conversations were had with Scott Lefton and Julie Hoff. Irene made her traditional Thanksgiving visit where we smoked the turkey. That's not euphemism, by the way.

Enid returned to Barcelona again in the fall where she taught multivariable calculus. Lew went out to visit her at the end of the term, and they enjoyed time together, renting a car and driving around Costa Brava sometimes hitting over 80 km/hr! Enid also took a trip to Maine to visit her sister Ellen and husband Dan. Enid's work as the Director of Advising and Assessment for the School of Math continues to be the main part of her job, and she's developed a great community of math majors through teaching seminar courses, supporting student clubs, and being a strong advocate, mentor, and resource for hundreds of kids (technically young adults). In her "spare" time she reads a lot, both for book clubs and beyond. Some of her favorite books from last year were *Where'd You Go*, *Bernadette* and *Becoming*. Ever the athlete, Enid often gets up before the sun to run and do bootcamp. Considering this is the coldest part of the day, it's even more impressive. Judges give her an 11.

Lew's work at Georgia Tech is still split between the Vice President of Research and the Dean of Sciences. He works with both faculty and staff to make sure that the campus cyberinfrastructure is supporting the research and academic missions. He continues to teach the Humor Genome Project class where students use big data techniques to study memes and jokes. And he's now a Fellow of the GT Center for Deliberate Innovation where he spends some time trying to better understand people. The nonprofit makerspace that Lew helped found, Decatur Makers, is thriving. It has around 250 members, stable financials, and an awesome staff to manage the facility. Lew's still doing comedy, with a focus on science and math. He contributed to some episodes of a clip show on the Weather Channel, and he continues to put on improv and comedy events around Atlanta. In the coming year, he's working to launch an Atlanta chapter of Science Riot which means he'll be producing science communication workshops to teach scientists the basics of comedy writing and performance, and then put them onstage. There's a 95% chance you'll learn something and laugh, too.

We would love to see you in 2019! Atlanta is easy to get to (at least when the TSA is working), and you always have a place to stay. We'll even provide a Faraday cage for your phone if you're now a little more concerned about data privacy. Did you enjoy this letter? Or hate it? [Please take our survey](#). We need more data on you.

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May you and your loved ones have a new year full of happiness, health and peace.
Happy Belated Hanukkah Merry Belated Christmas Happy Belated New Year