

THE CITY COLLEGE FELLOWSHIPS NEWSLETTER

February 2000

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past year has been an exciting time to direct the City College Fellowships Program. The number of applications has increased dramatically, and we are gradually increasing the number of Fellows in the Program. During the fall semester 1999, the Steering Committee interviewed eighteen students with outstanding academic records and accepted seven new Fellows. We welcome this diverse and talented group of students into our community.

I am also delighted to announce that the City College Fellowships Program has received new funding from the Dean of Humanities and the Arts, thanks to a generous donations from the Irani Fund and Summerfield Foundation. We will be able to support five additional Fellows majoring in departments or programs in the division. During the first round of interviews held in December, a committee representing the departments in the division admitted two new Fellows. We have extended the application deadline to February 22 with the goal of recruiting two more Fellows to enter the Program immediately. With these new Irani and Summerfield Fellows, we will have twenty five Fellows.

The Fellows have been busily engaged in a wide range of academic and professional activities. Excerpts from their journals demonstrate the benefits they have reaped from research, teaching, study abroad, and opportunities to participate in faculty committees.

All are indebted to the advice and support of their faculty mentors who have guided their research, steered them to additional funding sources, helped them to receive invitations to deliver papers at conferences, nurtured their interest in teaching, and provided valuable information about graduate programs in their disciplines.

During fall semester, the Fellowships Program was honored to welcome Dr. Salim Essop, a South African activist, political theorist, and Fulbright Scholar at CWE, to address our Fellows. He left a indelible impression on us all, not only because of his thought-provoking comments on the role of research in the larger society, but also because of his example of wisdom and generosity. This semester, many of the Fellows are enrolled in the exciting

interdisciplinary Fellowship seminar team-taught

by Professors Marshall Berman (Political Science) and Robert Twombly (History) on the modern city, with a focus on Paris and New York.

Looking to the future, we welcome the opening of the City College Honors Center. We expect it will provide exciting opportunities for our Fellows to come together with students from across the campus to share their experiences and knowledge. Our students have much to learn and gain from interaction with one another.

Susan Besse

NEW FELLOWS

Welcome!

It is with great pleasure that we announce and welcome our new Fellows for the spring semester 2000, City College Fellows:

Mr. Roni Ben-Nun (History)

Mr. Daniel Ercilla (History)

Ms. Avalon Garcia (Biochemistry)

Ms. Thea Halo (English)

Mr. C. Kelly Jackson (English)

Mr. Cristian Mercado (Psychology)

Mr. Jason Saffon (Political Science)

Irani/Summerfield Fellows (in the Humanities and Arts):

Ms. Renae Eidem (Music)

Ms. Joanne McCracken (History)

SPRING 2000 Schedule

Feb 28 **Symposia: James Freedman**
3-4:30 in NAC 6/316 "Teaching & Research"

March 30 **Mentoring Workshop**
12-2pm in NAC 6/316

April 6 **Workshop: Applying to**
Graduate School, 12-2pm in NAC 6/316

April 12 **Recruitment Meeting**
1-3pm in NAC 6/316

April 13 **Recruitment Meeting**
12-2pm in NAC 6/316

April 17 **Summer Proposals DUE**

May 1 **APPLICATIONS DUE**

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FELLOWS NEWS

Summer Reports

When Dreams Begin to Blossom

by Nicola Blake

With the help of my mentor, Professor Elizabeth Mazzola, I was selected to participate in Princeton University's *Summer Research Experience*, a summer internship for minority students who are interested in entering doctoral programs.

Along with the other nineteen scholarship recipients, I quickly adjusted to dormitory life, and after two days of lounging on the patio, the frenzy began. I met with my mentor Professor Thomas Roche, a world renowned Spensarian. He assigned me a bibliography project which involved many hours at the Hinde's Library. More important, he encouraged me to frame a thesis on any desired topic and instructed me to begin writing the essay. When Professor Roche left for Rome, I met my second mentor, Professor Esther Schor.

In the hours I spent working with her, I began to fully understand all that academic life entails. Each morning as well as in wee hours of the night, I would be greeted by emails from Professor Schor with lists of articles to find or extensive MLA searches to be done. My task was to find these obscure articles and "run" the MLA searches, then highlight the most relevant articles.

When I first stood in the foyer of the Firestone Library, I was struck by the immensity and grandeur of the Library. It took me six hours to find an article written by Joseph Litvak. By the time I found the article I was dizzy from all the walking, but in my wanderings I had learned the layout of the library. It is there that I began to spend my days. I became very good at library research and especially enjoyed the solitude and silence as I walked through the clusters of books.

In about my third week at Princeton, I began to work earnestly on my own project--framing women's voices in the Medieval and Renaissance periods. After conducting extensive MLA searches, I realized that choosing secondary sources to incorporate in the thesis is a daunting task because of the immensity of the sources available. Amidst mountains of books, heaped around me, I began to make selections. In keeping a diary of secondary sources, pictures, phrases, paragraphs and page numbers--materials which I thought would be useful

in my essay--I realized that I had begun to write the essay in my head.

Amidst our recreational activities as a group, I found my head buzzing with ideas about my essay. In conversations far ranging from my own topic, I began to think about aspects of my thesis. I found myself functioning regularly on the outside, while my mind pulsed with thoughts of the medieval period.

My nine weeks at Princeton culminated in the first draft of my Honor's thesis, "When the Female Body Becomes A Tomb: An Examination of Women's Voices in the Medieval and Renaissance Periods." In the essay, I sought to explore women's voices and the techniques these women used to ensure visibility. I will always remember the joy I found in silent moments when the voices of authors surrounded only me and filled my mind with new ideas.

My experience writing this essay was personally rewarding, not only because of my own intellectual growth but also because as a black, female, Jamaican-Americana, I was able to stand tall on Princeton ground and hold my own. For this experience, I will always be grateful to Princeton University. In nine weeks, I was able to lighten the hearts of my parents, who through me were able to live a dream once inconceivable to them.

Thanks to the CCNY Fellowship, to my mentor, Professor Mazzola, and to many of my professors, I am now ready to spend a life long journey answering many of the questions raised by my research.

Travelogue: Summer 1999

by Vasso Kampiti

One of the most satisfying experiences I have had as a City College Fellow was my summer 1999 project. I had the opportunity to participate with two other Fellows in the Fontainebleau program, a unique program combining traveling and studio work. During this time I had the opportunity to meet another civilization, make new friends and explore an old tradition from my own perspective.

The summer courses in Fontainebleau were exercises both in architecture and Beaux Art studio work. Early in the morning twenty-one participants from all over the States headed for the studios. There were no computers in Fontainebleau or fancy drawing boards, but with very few means we created architecture. Marino Ti Teana, France Hanque and Dominique Perrault taught us techniques in sculpture, mosaic, and painting. Going back to almost

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"ancient" ways of creating architecture taught me the importance of incorporating art in the manipulation of space. Computers are very useful tools, but after my experience in France, I realized that other tools are equally important in creating architecture. I do not know how we will teach architecture in the 21st Century, but I believe that in keeping some connection with traditional methods we preserve an important part of our humanity.

One of the most moving experiences I had was visiting the "Notre Dame du Haut." Upon entering the Ronchamp Chapel, I stood motionless in ecstasy for many minutes. I walked around the chapel several times and found that with each step the building changed. It was alive. I traced the lines passing from the ground to the chapel walls, to the little tiny windows and then to the shell-like roof all the way up to the blue sky. What I had in front of me was pure magic. The chapel was situated in such a way that it seemed to grow naturally in the space. The realization that what I had in front of me was an architect's creation made me feel envy and pride. When I entered the chapel, I was taken by another surprise. I knew of the different perspective techniques used in the chapel, but the way light entered into the space made the scene theatrical. What I found inside was spiritual not just because it was a chapel but because it was architecture.

Summer 1999

by Wolf Meinhardt

My summer of traveling and studying at the Fontainebleau Ecole de Beaux Arts was a summer of a few disappointments and many pleasures, the majority of them captured in two now-cherished sketchbooks.

More than anything I wrote or photographed, the sketchbooks became the most profound personal record of my time in Europe this past summer. The process of sketching produces a representation of a visual aspect of the moment, but for the person engaged in the process, the sketch can be a record of the entire sensory experience.

I now look at my sketches of LeCorbusier's chapel at Ronchamp and hear the congregation singing in German, the sound which accompanied the movement of pen across page. The drawing of the Roman arena at Arles makes me recall the delicious smell of the food being consumed around me at the sidewalk cafe from which I sketched.

The comparative sectional drawings of various streets in Barcelona remind me of the subtly

unpleasant smell of the still air in the narrow twisting streets of the older sections of the city in early August. And I will never be able to look at the sketch of the Tower of Jaume I in Placa del Rei without hearing two Spanish guitars being played a few feet away, early on a cool Sunday morning in Barcelona, during a moment of calm before hordes of tourists commenced their daily assault on Barcelona's former royal square.

Original Research

by Sarah Danielsson

This year I have written scholarly papers to present at three different conferences, all based on original research. The research was made possible by funding I received from the City College Fellowships Program for travel to archives and libraries in Sweden. Through many discussions with my mentor, Professor Huttenbach, I discovered an avenue of research not previously attempted. After considerable searching, I located the diaries and other unpublished materials of a prominent man, Sven Hedin, who had close contact with Nazi leaders. The holdings of Hedin proved to be the second largest personal archive, excluding that of the Royal Family, in Sweden.

During the time I spent in the archives, I discovered a passion for research I did not know I had. The addicting excitement of touching and reading original material dating from the middle of the 19th Century to the middle of the 20th Century made the hours fly by as though time was moving one hundred times its regular speed. The material I discovered all points in one direction: Hedin's full adoption of Nazi ideology. Although I have not exhausted the sources, I believe I have solid evidence for an indictment of Sven Hedin's intellectual integrity. Once I started writing the first conference paper, I realized how easy it is to write on a subject one knows well and has researched thoroughly.

Since this was my first attempt to do "real" research, I wasted a lot of energy on things of little importance. However, through the guidance of my mentor, I have been able to identify and focus on the important points. I hope that the reward for this hard work and long hours will be a monograph on Sven Hedin, a Swedish apologist for Nazi Germany.

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JOURNAL EXCERPTS FALL 1999

Executive and Curriculum Committee by Jonathan Cohen-Litant

The most valuable experience of this fall semester was my participation in the Executive and Curriculum Committees as well as monthly faculty meetings of the Architecture Department. The opportunity to represent the architecture student body gave me tremendous honor and pride. Although I seemed to be only an observer at the first several meetings, I realized very quickly that I had much to say. After listening and absorbing as much as I could from this new environment, I took full advantage of the opportunity to speak for the students. Attending these faculty meetings has given me a very broad understanding of academic life. During the Executive Committee meetings I often found myself in extremely difficult situations; several times I was expected to vote (1 vote out 7 members) either in favor or against very important decisions regarding the school and its faculty. At times these decisions had direct impact on specific faculty members or adjuncts at the school. Attending the Curriculum Committee became particularly interesting as many of the agendas discussed have led to important changes. Some of the more recent meetings were dedicated to the formation of a new Master's program.

Despite the rewards of my role as student representative, my role as Teaching Assistant for Professor DePace's second year studio continues to bring me the greatest pleasure. I am developing a passion for what I may now call guidance or tutoring, but which will hopefully someday become teaching. Nothing else has given me such a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Interaction with and feedback from a great group of students fills me with excitement. I am eager to share experiences, think through problems, and discuss any relevant topic, either with individuals or with the whole group.

Assistant Editor by Sarah Danielsson

During this past semester, I worked as assistant editor for the *Journal of Genocide Research*, and *The Genocide Forum*. The job is very exciting because I get to read the very latest research as

well as learn about the process of submission of papers to journals and the multi-step process of publication. The job also allows me to work closely with my mentor, who is the editor-in-chief of both publications. Most importantly, in learning what criteria make for a good article, I have improved my own writing skills.

GRE Prep Course

Ron Pilette will once more be teaching a spring session of the GRE Prep Course. It will begin Friday, March 10th and will be in the afternoon for four hours. The course will continue for six weeks meeting Friday afternoons for 4 hours. If you are interested in attending, please contact Renee ASAP.

AWARDS AT CITY COLLEGE

- **Starkweather Award** " provides a stipend of \$1,000 to a student engaged in a significant humanistic project under the guidance of a faculty mentor." Deadline to apply is March 15 @ 4pm; for information contact Humanities & Arts Office, NAC 6/293.
- **The Alumni Association** of City College of New York is granting five (5) \$1,000 scholarships to undergraduates. Deadline to apply is March 24th; for information contact Office of Student Affairs, A 201.

CITY COLLEGE FELLOWSHIPS is a program developed by the Ford Foundation with City College, to attract and support students in choosing careers in advanced research and college teaching.

With the goal of preparing promising undergraduates for careers in advanced research and college teaching, this program provides financial support and a developmental structure, from the beginning of a student's sophomore year until admission into graduate school.

The CITY COLLEGE FELLOWSHIPS OFFICE is located in the NAC building, 6/316, 650-8388.

Newsletter compiled by: Renee Philippi