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**ASIANetwork** is a consortium of over one hundred North American colleges which strives to strengthen the role of Asian Studies within the framework of liberal arts education to help prepare a new generation of undergraduates for a world in which Asian societies will play more and more prominent roles. The unique teaching mission of the undergraduate liberal arts institution poses special opportunities and challenges in the development of Asian Studies. ASIANetwork seeks to encourage the study of Asian countries and cultures on our campuses and to enable our students and faculty to experience these cultures first hand. In a time of fiscal constraints, ASIANetwork facilitates conversation among faculty and administrators concerning the development and strengthening of Asian studies programs, as well as ways to foster collaboration among institutions.

The **ASIANetwork Exchange**, *A Newsletter for Teaching About Asia*, is published three times a year. The newsletter, an important venue for communication among members, prints, for example, the speeches of ASIANetwork Conference keynote speakers, course syllabi, and reflections by faculty and by students of study-abroad programs.

We welcome submissions of materials which support the above goals. **Deadlines** for submission of materials are **August 1** for the Fall issue, **November 1** for the Winter issue, and **February 1** for the Spring issue. The editors reserve the right to edit all materials submitted for publication.

Materials may be submitted electronically to ANExchange@augustana.edu, or disks may be sent to Anne Prescott, **ASIANetwork Exchange**, Augustana College, 639 38th Street, Rock Island, Illinois 61201. For further information contact the editors at the above e-mail address or by telephone at (309) 794-7656 (Anne Prescott) or (309) 794-7269 (Ben Nefzger). Anne Prescott, Editor; Ben Nefzger and Marsha Smith, Assistant Editors
From the Executive Director

I write this message having just participated with four other colleagues in the selection of participants for the summer 2001 Freeman Foundation sponsored Faculty-Student Fellows Program. The applicant pool was the largest and the strongest ever. We considered twenty-three grant proposals involving ninety-six individuals. Thanks to the generosity of the Freemans, we are providing support for thirteen faculty to direct forty-six student undergraduate research projects, a total of fifty-nine persons. Research groups will work in India (4), Nepal, Thailand (2), Indonesia, China (3), Japan and Mongolia. All groups come from different colleges, and this is the first time faculty and students at Austin College, Belmont University, Elmira College, Lake Forest College, Milliken University, St. Lawrence University, and Viterbo College have received Faculty-Student Fellow awards.

This is a wonderful program, and I would like to spend the remainder of this column discussing its growth and development. The ASIANetwork Faculty-Student Fellows Program is modeled after a program developed at Carleton College which was brought to the attention of the consortium by Eleanor Zelliot, at that time a member of the board. The first group of ten faculty-student teams left for Asia the summer of 1998, followed by ten teams during the summer of 1999 and ten in 2000.

Last April, Stan Mickel, then Board Chair, and I had a brief meeting with Houghton Freeman of the Freeman Foundation in the lobby of the Algonquin Hotel in New York City to talk about the possibility of gaining renewed support from the Freeman Foundation for ASIANetwork summer initiatives. It was a memorable experience.

In a brief forty-five minute meeting, Mr. Freeman expressed continued interest in the Summer Institute program to develop study abroad programs in Asia. He then committed Freeman Foundation support to enable ASIANetwork to run a second cycle of Institutes that will be run during the summer of 2002 for eight and 2003 for seven ASIANetwork colleges. Then he boldly suggested that the Faculty-Student Fellows Program be expanded by encouraging faculty to direct undergraduate research in Asia for greater numbers of students rather than supporting only one-on-one mentoring. When Mr. Freeman asked us how many solid proposals for undergraduate research might be expected based on a formula of faculty taking up to five students to Asia in a given summer, Stan and I responded, “perhaps forty.” Mr. Freeman’s reply was, “Let’s do it; we’ll double the size of this program.”

As we parted, Mr. Freeman suggested that if the pool of applicants for the summer 2001 program was significantly larger than anticipated we should inform him so that he might consider providing additional support for this initiative. In early January, having received a much greater than expected number of grant requests, I called the Freeman headquarters in Vermont, and in a short phone conversation, Mr. Freeman committed an additional $126,000 to this program to enable twenty additional participants to join the upcoming program.

As has been the case in past years, information about the grant proposals will be posted on our website at www.asianetwork.org. I hope you will visit the site and read about them because they say a great deal about the strength of Asian studies programs and the liberal arts at small colleges. Universally these research initiatives are being led by capable and dedicated faculty backed by strong administrative support. The range of research being undertaken is impressive, as are the student researchers, who are both eager and well prepared to undertake their projects.

We encourage you, as faculty at ASIANetwork colleges, to begin the process of collaborating with your students to develop meaningful research projects for next year’s program. We are grateful to the Freeman Foundation for its continued support of these initiatives and the consortium, because we believe, as do the Freemans, that travel and research experiences in Asia have a dramatic effect on the lives of participants and their colleges.

Van Symons
9th Annual ASIANetwork Conference Program

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
Joseph W. Elder
University of Wisconsin-Madison
“Teaching India: Is Seeing Believing?”
Regge Life
Executive Director and Founder, Global Film Network, Inc.
“The Underrated Power of Culture”

INVITATION FROM JAMES G. LOCHTEFELD
Chair, ASIANetwork

As Chair of the ASIANetwork Board, I cordially invite you to attend the ninth annual conference of the ASIANetwork, which in its short life has been tremendously productive in promoting Asian studies at small colleges. The conference will take place on April 20-22, 2001, and will be held at the Hilton Cleveland East/Beachwood, just outside of Cleveland. Your travel plans should take you to the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, which is about ten miles southwest of downtown Cleveland.

The program follows the general pattern of previous ASIANetwork conferences in seeking to foster conversation between conference participants—whether sparked by the program’s formal sessions, or arising from more informal opportunities during breaks and at mealtimes. Although conference participants represent many disciplines and work in many different regions of Asia, we are united by our common commitment to the liberal arts, and to the work of teaching and learning that this commitment brings.

A primary theme running through this conference is a focus on the arts, and ways in which attention to arts can enrich our teaching. In keeping with this focus, both of our keynote speakers have done significant work in film, although in very different contexts. Working out of his discipline as a sociologist, Joseph Elder has made a number of highly regarded films about religion and social life in North India. Regge Life is an African-American filmmaker whose experience in Japan has been mirrored and explored in three critically acclaimed films (Doubles, Struggle and Success, and After America ... After Japan).

The theme of the arts is also visible in many of the meeting’s panels, which Board members and many others have worked hard to put together. As always, the major thrust of our program is pedagogical—to provide colleagues with ideas, resources, and strategies that will help their teaching. Aside from the panels focused on the arts, there are also panels flowing from programs funded by the Freeman Foundation, namely the Freeman Faculty-Student Research Program, and the Freeman College-In-Asia Program, as well as panels concerned with larger issues affecting Asian Studies, whether conceptual or institutional.

The final emphasis on the arts will come on Saturday afternoon (April 21), when the conference will shift from the conference hotel to the Cleveland Museum of Art. Our time at the Museum will have three different dimensions: an overview of the entire Asian collection, interactive sessions focusing on the galleries and on the Museum’s Distance Learning programs, and finally unstructured Museum time. Buses will transport conference attendees to the Museum from the conference hotel, and back to the hotel from the Museum. For those interested in ways to enhance their teaching, I especially recommend the Distance Learning offering, since this allows the teacher to bring the Museum’s collection into the classroom. I had an outstanding experience with this last October (viewing Indian Buddhist images with my Buddhism class), and the student response mirrors my enthusiasm.

As in the past two years, the conference will be preceded by a day trip to Asia-related sites in the Cleveland area, including a Hindu temple, the Vietnamese Buddhist Association, the Asia Plaza, and the Cleveland Chinese Senior Citizens Association. Complete cost for the trip, including lunch, will be $25 per person. An additional and even more unusual opportunity is the chance to attend a performance by the Cleveland Orchestra on Thursday evening, April 19 (for which the cost will depend on the price of the ticket).

The conference host for Saturday evening is John Carroll University, which has been an institutional member since 1994. We are grateful for their hospitality and their support. Our visit will begin with a reception in the Murphy Room, which has been graciously funded by the Dean of the College. This will be followed by the Saturday evening banquet in the Student Activities Center Conference Room, and by Regge Life’s keynote address in the Jardine Room. Buses will transport conference attendees to John Carroll University for the evening, and return them to the conference hotel after the program.

In closing I make one final appeal. With regard to
searching for funding, one of ASIANetwork's guiding principles has been (in Suzanne Barnett's words) that "good ideas lead to appealing grant proposals." Although our past proposals have been very successful, we must still plan for the future, and the most important element for this is good ideas! Accordingly, I encourage you to join the Board and the Development Team on Friday, April 20, immediately following Joseph Elder's keynote speech, for a short and informal session in which we can solicit these good ideas.

Friday April 20, 2001
8:45-5:00 - Gather in Lobby
* "A Sampler of Asian Cleveland: Pre-Conference Field Trip To Focus on Issues of Immigration and Acculturation"
Leader: Susan O. Long, John Carroll University

2001 ASIANetwork Conference
April 20-22, 2001
Hilton Cleveland
Cleveland, Ohio

*Denotes meals included in the ASIANetwork Conference Registration fee.

Friday April 20, 2001
4:00-10:00 p.m.
Registration: Lobby
6:30-8:00 p.m.
*Dinner: Ballroom

8:00-9:30 p.m.
Welcome: Ballroom
* James G. Lochtefeld, Chair, ASIANetwork, Carthage College
* Introduction: Cathy Benton, Lake Forest College
* Speaker: Joseph W. Elder, University of Wisconsin-Madison
"Teaching India: Is Seeing Believing?"

9:30-10:15 p.m.
* "Good ideas lead to appealing grant proposals" - Directors "C"
A chance to give Board and the ASIANetwork Development
Team your best ideas for potential grant programs.
Leaders: Stanley Mickel, Wittenberg University and Cathy Benton, Lake Forest College

Saturday April 21
7:00-8:15 a.m.
*Continental Breakfast - Assembly Areas near Ballroom

8:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Registration: Lobby

8:30-10:00 a.m.
Plenary Session - Ballroom
* "The Fulbright Programs and Asian Studies: Strategies for Success"
Convener: David Adams, Senior Program Officer, Asia/Middle East, Council for International Exchange of Scholars
Please note: To enable greater focus on the "how-to" aspect of this plenary session, members are encouraged to review the websites for CIES <www.cies.org> and Department of Education <www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/HEP/iegps/> before the meeting.

10-10:15 a.m.
*Beverage Break - Assembly Area

10:15-11:45 a.m.
Concurrent Panels
* Freeman Faculty-Student Research Fellows - South Meeting Room
Convener: Teodora Amaloza, Illinois Wesleyan University
* "Bringing Asian Art into the Classroom: Teaching Methods and Curriculum Development - North Meeting Room
Convener: Paul Nietupski, John Carroll University
Marjorie Williams, Cleveland Museum of Art
Lisa Safford, Hiram College
Betsey Ayer, Hartwick College
Mary Colan, John Carroll University.

12:00-1:00 p.m.
*Lunch - Ballroom
1:00 p.m.
Depart for Cleveland Museum of Art (on buses). Meet in
lobby.

1:30-2:30 p.m.
* “The Asian Collection at the Cleveland Museum-Gartner
Auditorium
Convener: Marjorie Williams, Director of Education at the
Cleveland Museum of Art.

2:30-2:45 p.m.
Break

2:45-3:45 p.m.
Concurrent Interactive Sessions in the Museum Galleries
* Indian Gallery
Leader: Joellen Deoreo, Coordinator of Exhibition and
Adult Programs, CMA
* Chinese Gallery
Leader: Hou-mei Sung, Research Assistant, Department of
Asian Art, CMA
* Japanese Gallery
Leader: Jean Graves, Educational Instructor, Department of
Education, CMA
* Distance Learning at the Cleveland Museum-Recital Hall
Leader: Dale Hilton, Distance Learning Content
Coordinator, CMA

3:45-4:45 p.m.
Unscheduled Museum Time

5:00 p.m.
Depart from Museum, return to the Hilton (on buses)

6:00 p.m.
Depart from the Hilton, travel to John Carroll University (on
buses)

6:30-7:00 p.m.
Reception hosted by John Carroll University, Murphy
Room
Host: Dr. Nick Baumgartner, Dean of the College of Arts
and Sciences

7:00-8:30 p.m.
* Dinner, Student Activities Center Conference Room

8:30-9:30 p.m.
Keynote Address - Jardine Room
* Introduction: Yoko Ueda, Spelman College
* Speaker: Regge Life, Executive Director and Founder,
Global Film Network, Inc.
“The Underrated Power of Culture”

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* Lion Head Tomb Guardian
Chinese, late 7th or early 8th century
Tang Dynasty, Ceramic (sancai ware)
The Cleveland Museum of Art
Sunday April 22
7:00-7:20 a.m. - Directors “C”
Interfaith Service
Conducted by George Meese, Eckerd College

7:00-8:00 a.m.
*Continental Breakfast - Assembly Area
8:00-8:45 a.m.
ASIANetwork Business Meeting - Ballroom
Convener: James G. Lochtefeld, Chair, ASIANetwork

9:00-10:00 a.m.
Plenary Session - Ballroom
* “Ethics and Politics in China and the West”
Convener: Charles Ess, Drury University
Timothy Cheek, Colorado College
Erin McCarthy, St. Lawrence University

10:00-10:15 a.m.
*Beverage Break - Assembly Area

10:15-11:45 a.m.
Concurrent Panels
* The Freeman Foundation College-In-Asia Program - South Meeting Room

12:00-1:00 p.m.
*Closing Lunch - Ballroom

1:00-2:00 p.m.
ASIANetwork Spring Board of Directors Meeting - Director “B”

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*Human Head Tomb Guardian*
Chinese, late 7th or early 8th century
Tang Dynasty, Ceramic (sancai ware)
The Cleveland Museum of Art
Accommodations and Travel Information

Conference Site: Hilton Cleveland East/Beachwood, 3663 Park East Drive, Beachwood, OH 44122

Reservations number: 1-877-865-5324
Reservations deadline: Sunday, April 1, 2001. Rooms will be guaranteed either with a first night advance deposit, or an accepted major credit card number. Any rooms remaining after April 1 will be released for normal sale. Reservations requested after April 1 may not be eligible for the group discount, and are subject to availability.

ASIANetwork Conference room rates: $89 per night for a single or double. The rate does not include local taxes, which are currently 11.75%.

Ground Transportation between Cleveland Hopkins International Airport and the Hilton Cleveland East/Beachwood Hotel:
Carrier: Grand Transportation Services, Ltd.
Contact Person: Dan Maurer (identify yourself as an ASIANetwork member)
Reservations Numbers: 1-800-322-0515;(216) 831-7177
Cost: $15 one way, $25 RT (must book RT from the start; cash payments only)
Timing: Arranged by reservation.
Reservation deadline: April 6, 2001 (this will allow Grand Transportation to plan around our arrival and departure times, and to transport us in a timely manner).

Conference Registration Information
Registration Deadline: Friday, March 30, 2001

Registration Fees:
$150 ASIANetwork members
$160 ASIANetwork non-members

Late registration fees
(received after March 30, 2001)
$160 ASIANetwork Members
$170 ASIANetwork non-members

Meals:
The following meals are included in the ASIANetwork Conference registration fee:
Friday, April 20 - Opening banquet
Saturday, April 21 - continental breakfast, noon lunch, evening banquet, and mid-morning break beverages.
Sunday, April 22 - continental breakfast, noon lunch, and mid-morning break beverages

Fees: The ASIANetwork Conference registration fee is inclusive, and must be paid in full.
Conference Registration fees should be paid by check or money order to ASIANetwork, and sent to: Dr. Van J. Symons, Executive Director, ASIANetwork, 639 38th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201-2296
Work: 309-794-7413
E-mail: <hisymons@augustana.edu>

ASIANetwork is not equipped to receive credit card payments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please join us for the 2002 ASIANetwork Conference, to celebrate the consortium’s 10th anniversary

Dates: April 19-21, 2002
Venue: Hickory Ridge Conference Center, Lisle, IL (suburban Chicago)
Program Chair: Joel Smith, Skidmore College, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-1632
Work: 518-580-5407
Fax: 518-580-5409
Email: jsmith@skidmore.edu

The 2002 ASIANetwork Freeman Programs
Applications due November 30, 2001

The Student-Faculty Fellows Program supports student research in Asia, carried out under the direction of a faculty mentor. In its early years this program was limited to ten faculty-student pairs, but the grant renewal has committed funds to enable up to twenty more students to take part. Faculty can now take groups of up to five students for either collaborative or individual undergraduate research projects, and proposals involving multiple students are especially encouraged.

The College in Asia Summer Institutes Program provides training to help ASIANetwork institutions create on-site programs in Asia. In the summer of 2002 eight colleges, each represented by an administrator and a faculty member, will be selected to participate in a three-week institute conducted on-site in Asia. 2002 will be the first year for this program since the grant from the Freeman Foundation was renewed in the summer of 2000.
The collection at the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) includes nearly 40,000 works of art from around the world and throughout history. Most are on permanent exhibition (except for light-sensitive works on paper or textiles). The CMA is especially renowned for the breadth and quality of its collections. Of greatest interest to ASIANetwork members is its comprehensive Asian collection of some 4,800 works. The Museum’s most recent Asian acquisitions include two major Chinese Tang dynasty sculptures, *Pair of Tomb Guardians*, dating from the late 7th to early 8th century (see photos on pages 6 and 7). This is the first set of tomb guardians to be owned by the Museum.

The CMA has long cultivated connections with scholars and institutions in Asia. In particular, the CMA’s ties with the Nara National Museum, which began around 1915, have allowed the CMA unique access to some of the best Japanese historical art works. The CMA was also chosen as one of only three museums in the world to participate in a Japanese government sponsored exhibition exchange program.

CMA is also known for its Asia-related publications. Most recently they released *Masterworks of Asian Art*, in which more than one hundred of the greatest artistic achievements of the Asian continent are represented in full color. This book was created to enhance the general reader’s appreciation of Asian art, especially the most renowned objects in the CMA’s Asian collection. It includes examples from China, Japan, Korea, India, Central Asia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Nepal, Kashmir, and Tibet.

In the book’s foreward, museum director Robert P. Bergman writes: “The art of these societies, encapsulating centuries of ritual, belief, legend, cultural archetype, and self-definition, is a key for Westerners to developing understanding of the Asian world. Moreover, the aesthetic and spiritual rewards of viewing, contemplating, and studying the often staggeringly subtle expressions of Asian art cannot be overestimated.”
The Dangers and Pleasures of Teaching Orientalist Classic Books

American Orientalist Classics on the Chinese Revolution: Adventures in the “Revolution Paradigm”

Charles W. Hayford

Others on this panel deal with works recognized as “Orientalist” in the sense of the word which has become usual. The books I would like to talk about are not so clearly in that category, but I think they bring up some of the problems which Anand Yang describes in his piece on Orientalism in ASIANetwork Exchange Vol. VII, No. 3 (Spring 2000), and they certainly need to be subjected to the type of scrutiny so well indicated in Sam Yamashita’s piece in that issue. That is, Western reporters in wartime or revolutionary China such as Edgar Snow, Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby, and Jack Belden, were smart, informed, and sincere, but their writings and analysis, long taken as canonical, are now problematic; we no longer take them as raw, transparent observation (if we ever really did) but must, in a metaphor lifted from Tim Cheek, “filet” them. On the other hand, our students should not ignore or dismiss these classics if we are to confront China’s modern experiences and America’s peculiar attempt to understand them—besides, they’re still challenging fun to read! We now need to contemplate the form and worldview of their presentations as much as their contents. My thoughts here were developed while teaching courses and working on a manuscript tentatively called America’s Chinas: From the Opium Wars to Tiananmen, which deals with Americans who lived in China and wrote about it for the audience back home.

Before Richard Nixon pulled his Marco Polo act in 1972, mainstream Americans largely based their understandings of China on “China Revolution Classics” written by journalists who had lived and developed careers in China in the 1930s and 1940s. Red Star Over China (1937) was categorized as a “classic” and the “China scoop of the century.” Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby’s Thunder Out of China (1946) was widely assigned in college courses, along with Graham Peck’s Two Kinds of Time (1950), and Jack Belden’s China Shakes the World (1949). In addition to books by Agnes Smedley, Anna Louise Strong, Nym Wales (Helen Foster Snow), and Israel Epstein, we might include John Fairbank’s United States and China (1948), whose first edition was written hot off the griddle on his return from wartime China (and is much more commanding reading than the more academic later editions).

The “China Story” in these classics was perceived and told in term of Revolution, and we can now more clearly see how the constituent narratives, metaphors, and “key-words” told the story of the Liberation from Feudalism and Imperialism; the story was also that of the Chinese Nation, assuming that the Chinese State represented it, and Revolution produced it. I have outlined in my book To the People: James Yen and Village China (1990) how Chinese of the New Culture Movement (1916-1923) came to see the village and the “peasant” not as the basis of glorious tradition but as dark, backward, and shameful; young China searched for a new force powerful enough to destroy traditional culture and to repel Imperialism. This destruction and regeneration is what many young Chinese meant by “revolution”—building a powerful political institution. The search for their own historical Big Story led them to construe China as “feudal,” to cast China as the innocent victim of imperialist enormity—“poor little China”—and to nominate the “peasant” as the most oppressed class of the oppressed nation.

This construction of history was not simple observation. Historians outside China do not generally see China as “feudal”: from at least the sixteenth century the Chinese rural economy had been basically commercialized, with rela-
Harry Harding has described with authority and wit how creep-
American journalists since 1949 to cover China from China,
and their books made appropriate splashes. But the solution
proposed depended on the terms in which these realities
were construed as problems. To put it baldly, reconstruing China as “feudal” made “feudalism” a curable structural malady, made the revolutionary destruction of the landlord class the solution, and made the man with the hoe into a “peasant.” (I have discoursed elsewhere on the change in English language usage from “farmer” to “peasant.”) Linking feudalism to Imperialism made perfect political and cultural sense at the time of Japanese invasion.

Yet I can remember in my first years as a teaching assistant in the late 1960s and at Oberlin College in the early 1970s that students responded immediately and directly to these revolutionary classics as intuitively obvious. I met resistance when I suggested that perhaps Mao could only swim in water, not walk on it. The agenda was to see alternatives to Western Society; China was the Other, anti-US, and Mao was its prophet. Only later did it begin to dawn on me that “China” was not a topic or a subject; I was trained in “China studies,” but had no idea what a “China study” was. Even Nixon, Henry Kissinger, and the National Security Council turned to many of the China Revolution Classics which had stirred the American counter-culture radicals of the 1960s, and on which scholars explicitly relied. Lucien Bianco wrote his deservedly respected classic Origins of the Chinese Revolution (1967; translated 1971) partly to counter the loony Maoism of 1960s Paris; he specifically cites the China Revolution Classics as touchstones for the nature of revolution in China (p. 217).

THE CLASSICS DISSED
Soon after Nixon’s Presidential party returned from China, a number of things happened. First, the Mao jacket replaced Nehru’s as chic in a huge China fashion binge. From Wall St. to the Great Wall, Americans wanted to take up where they left off when the Korean War sealed shut the Open Door. Second, however, an independent and well-qualified new generation of American reporters, students, and travelers started to stay in China for longer periods. These new Marco Polos explored a China which during the 1980s appeared to be making impressive progress, but which was still a poor country, run clumsily and often oppressively by bureaucrats, not revolutionaries. There was some but not much to be seen of the socialist ideals which the China books had vaunted as the justification for Mao’s violent revolution. Fox Butterfield, Richard Bernstein, and Jay and Linda Matthews went from graduate programs to Beijing, and were the first American journalists since 1949 to cover China from China, and their books made appropriate splashes.

American students and journalists woke up, and what they smelled was not coffee: “China stinks,” wrote one. Harry Harding has described with authority and wit how creep-
ing realism, even cynicism, affected the attitudes of students and scholars once they got to China. (“From China With Disdain: New Trends in the Study of China,” reprinted in Jonathan Goldstein, et al. eds., America Views China: American Images of China Then and Now (1991)). Some recovering Maoists, perhaps as part of twelve-step programs, were especially sharp, even bitter, in their attacks, but many thoughtful observers charged that the China field was naive and had pandered to revolution. Ramon H. Myers and Thomas A. Metzger, long critical of Mao’s China, produced a detailed critique of what they called the “revolution paradigm,” a network of assumptions, practices, and habits biased against conservatives and tradition. (“Sinological Shadows: The State of Modern Chinese Studies in the United States,” Washington Quarterly Spring 1980).

Steven Mosher turned his experience in Guangdong and his expulsion from the Stanford Anthropology Ph.D. program into a best-selling China book, Broken Earth: The Rural Chinese (1983). He wrote that when he went to China, he “was still captive of the paramount myth of the Chinese revolution . . . the promise of peasant salvation.” Mosher took John K. Fairbank to task for once remarking that “valued in the Chinese peasant’s terms, the revolution has been a magnificent achievement, a victory not only for Mao Zedong, but for several hundreds of millions of the Chinese people.” Mosher argued that in fact peasant life was better in the 1940s, before the Revolution, than in the 1980s (pp. 299-300, excerpting (without ellipses to show his excision of qualification) from Fairbank, China Perceived (1974), p. xvii). One can’t help but feel that Mosher consciously set out to write a controversial book which would make his reputation; students can have a good time sorting out the nature of Mosher’s charges and comparing them with the evidence cited in his cogent and colorful writings. (For a fair-minded review of the Stanford controversy, see Martin Whyte, “The Rural Chinese and Steven Mosher,” Journal of Peasant Studies 11.2 (Winter 1984): 111-18.)

On a more disinterested level, early in the 1980s, Stephen MacKinnon organized a conference cum reunion for some forty surviving wartime China correspondents and diplomats to assess their experience and achievements. The proceedings are reported in Stephen R. MacKinnon and Oris Friesen, China Reporting: An Oral History of American Journalism in the 1930s and 1940s (1987). John Fairbank, when asked to address the conference and the success of wartime reporting, challenged the self-congratulatory mood:

From the point of view of history, this reunion should be a wake. The American experience in China [during the 1940s] was a first-class disaster for the American people . . . It’s perfectly plain that we all tried, but we failed . . . We could not educate or illuminate or inform the American people or the American leadership in such a way that we could modify the outcome . . . we struggled but we didn’t succeed.
Correspondents disagreed; as one said, “we did a pretty goddamn good job.”

In the scholarly world, a generation of scholars coming out of the 1960s, not only went to China to see for themselves, but also began the spadework in libraries and archives, and talked with scholars in Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, and the PRC. Joseph Esherick culled the sobering lessons of this crop of Ph.D. dissertations in his article “10 Theses on the Chinese Revolution” (Modern China 21.1 1995), the most useful single essay on this question, and well worth assigning to bright undergraduates. He deftly synthesizes the new work which pictured the revolution as only one stage and one part of modern China, and Mao as the leader of a statist movement, not (in Mao’s 1927 phrase) “the forcible overthrow of one social class by another.” Likewise, Andrew Walder, “Actually Existing Maoism,” Australian Journal of Chinese Studies 18 (July 1987) crisply compares “Western view of Maoism” with the “Chinese experience of Maoism.”

In addition to these studies which undermine the sense of revolutionary inevitability and infallibility, recent revisionist studies provide background for the contention that China’s uncompromising nationalism under the Nationalists provoked Japan and handcuffed American policy. This is especially disturbing to students who have read the recent works on the Rape of Nanking, and many are struck by the parallels with the debate over American intervention from the Gulf War to Kosovo. Classes find a fascinating new moral dimension to the argument in Arthur Waldron’s introduction and notes to John Van Antwerp MacMurray, How the Peace Was Lost: The 1935 Memorandum, “Developments Affecting American Policy in the Far East (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1992), a long suppressed State Department memorandum which challenged Roosevelt and the public’s view of the rights and wrongs of the Sino-Japanese conflict. Steven Vlastos of the University of Iowa also suggested to me Hasegawa Michiko’s 1983 article, “Postwar View of the Greater East Asia War,” translated in Japan Echo XI (1984): 29-37, which presents the personal thoughts and revisionist observations of a younger Japanese scholar, who speaks of a “100-Year East Asia War,” and asks “was ‘liberation of Asia’ mere demagoguery”? Most American students will not be converted by these arguments, but the exercise is useful in challenging their initial reactions to such books as Red Star.

An even deeper challenge comes in the works such as Thomas Rawski, Economic Growth in Pre-war China (1989), which undermines the idea that the Chinese “traditional” economy was stagnant (and thus that only revolution could revive it) or Sherman Cochran, Big Business in China: Sino-foreign Rivalry in the Cigarette Industry, 1890-1930 (1980), which shows how Chinese businesses competed with some success. In the present atmosphere of debate over the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) and over China’s entry into WTO, students (and perhaps some teachers?) need to be reminded of Ye Olde Law of Comparative Advantage in order for the debate to be properly complex.
however, and owed more to Mark Twain, Woodrow Wilson, or FDR than to Lenin. Looking at the Chinese village, they argued that “less than a thousand years ago Europe lived this way; then Europe revolted ...” (p. xix) The Chinese government was run by “feudal minded men” who ran it in the interests of “feudal landlords.” (pp. 310-313) Failing the development of a middle class, the only other organized group was the Communists, who represented a new French Revolution: “We revere the memory of that Revolution, but we regard such uprisings in our own time with horror and loathing.” (p. 20) Chapter One, “The Peasant,” begins: “The Chinese who fought this war were peasants born in the Middle Ages to die in the twentieth century.” The question from the nineteenth century had been “how do we make China more like Us?” The question for the wartime reporters was “how do we understand and convey the change from Feudal China to Revolutionary China?”

Another example of how a book changes when different readers read it in different times is Belden’s China Shakes the World. The book was largely ignored when it first appeared in 1949, but became a classic when reprinted in 1970 by the Monthly Review Press with an admiring preface by Owen Lattimore, who was once delusionally reviled as an agent of Stalin and Mao. Readers then mistook it for a Maoist book; actually it is acutely skeptical of Mao and directly addressed the contradiction between Mao’s populist pretensions and his despotism: “many supporters of the Chinese Communists,” states Belden in his concluding pages, “have made what Montesquieu called the mistake of confusing the power of the people with the liberty of the people.”

CONCLUSIONS AND SPECULATIONS: WHAT COLOR IS YOUR PARADIGM?

We’ll leave for another time the question of where we go from here, paradigm-wise, but I can’t quit without making at least a gesture in that direction. For a generation, the iconic view of Mao presented him as hero of Liberation and of the Cultural Revolution, with the crowds in Tiananmen in weeping adoration, waving Little Red Books. 1989 replaced that image with the equally iconic picture of the lone demonstrator confronting the tank, armed only with a briefcase; the embedded view changed from the mass/Mao icon to the individual defying the state, from civil obedience to civil disobedience.

This new icon no more shows the complex fix in which China finds itself than did the “revolution paradigm,” but the teaching situation is still lively. Depending on how much time there is in a course, one appealing group of arguments is (literally) visible in the video Gate of Heavenly Peace (1995), narrated by Carma Hinton. Son of the Revolution (1983)—one student called it Some of the Revolution—and Wild Swans (1991) use analyzable strategies to present and sometimes obscure political analysis which can lead to many happy hours of wrangling. (Peter Zarrow, “Meanings of China’s Cultural Revolution,” positions 7.1 (Spring 1991): 165-191 questions the memoir literature; Ralph A. Litzinger, “Screening the Political: Pedagogy and Dissent in The Gate of Heavenly Peace,” positions 7.3 (Winter 1999): 827-850 talks about teaching the video.) The colorful Fifth Generation Films, such as Red Sorghum, Blue Kite, and Yellow Earth display a stifling, rural, patriarchal feudalism, and raise many of the same questions about China as Red Star, Thunder Out of China, China Shakes the World, and The Good Earth; their particular Orientalism is ironic, in that it goes back to May Fourth/New Culture attitudes which were taken up by Snow, White, and Belden, and now turned against the Party which came to power on its power.

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When Li Po Is Not Li Po: Western Stereotypes in Asian Studies

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As an Asianist recently hired to teach at a small Midwest college, I was both surprised and delighted to learn that all students were required to complete a three-semester Heritage series which included one semester of study in Asian culture. The purpose of this series in general and the Asian component in particular is to "move [students] beyond [their] personal world—[their] comfort zone—and allow [them] to enter the realms of other cultures and individuals." Not only is this "broadening of students' perspectives" an admirable objective in a liberal arts institution such as this, but also, it is becoming virtually indispensable in higher education today for preparing students to meet the challenges of an integrated global community. On a more immediate level, I hoped that students who completed the Heritage program would go on to take my Asian History courses. Assuming that their Heritage coursework would provide them with a common core of information and experience, I anticipated building on that foundation as we investigated Asian history, culture, and literature in more depth. Consequently, I was eager to begin teaching the pre-selected set of Asian-related texts in concert with other faculty in the program drawn from across the disciplines—Chemistry, Physics, Spanish, Psychology, Political Science and English.

One of my favorite of these required texts is The Selected Poems of Li Po. When teaching this anthology in the Heritage program, I begin by providing my students with a short historical background (abbreviated here) to Li Po, the Tang Dynasty and its captivating capital city, Chang’an.

The Tang (617-907) was certainly one of China’s greatest dynasties in terms of military conquest, Confucian politics and cultural refinement. Western military expansion across the Pamirs had reopened the ancient Silk route of the Roman and Han empires to the Middle East. Camel caravans again linked East with West, carrying not only exotic trade commodities, but new customs, religions, music, and ideas. Nestorian priests, Persian traders and even Russian entertainers enriched the already flourishing culture of the capital city. Chang’an became the medieval world’s largest and most cosmopolitan city, attracting the finest intellectuals, artists and artisans of the realm and beyond. The dream and desire of all aspiring Chinese intellectuals—including Li Po—was to seek and find appointment at the Tang court in this dynamic city.

Li Po today is considered one of China’s greatest poets; certainly during his own time, he was a most unusual character. During a period of Confucian revival, Buddhist ascendance, and social refinement, Li Po lived a life of eccentricity and excess. He was a free spirit—a "Banished Immortal"—of tremendous talent, who refused to be channeled into traditional roles of scholar or official. He demanded acceptance and position on his own terms—based solely on the uniqueness of his wit, insight and poetic expression. Though he scandalized the social elite with his impropriety in drink and speech, and his association with riff-raff in bawdy wine shops and bazaars, his undeniable talent won him appointment to the imperial court of Xuanzong in Chang’an. However, his fiercely independent, defiant, even insubordinate spirit eventually overwhelmed imperial infatuation with his talent, and Li Po was dismissed from his position as court poet. He was subsequently exiled to the far Southwest—beyond the borders of Chinese civilization—for his support of an anti-Tang faction during the An Lushan Rebellion (755).

After introducing the poet and his times, I then take the students through a careful analysis of the poems, taking care to explain historic and symbolic references. The following poems are examples of two quite distinct experiences in Li Po’s life.

Night Thought at Tung-lin Monastery on Lu Mountain

Alone, searching for blue-lotus roofs,
I set out from city gates. Soon, frost clear,
Hu Creek’s moon bright in pale water.
Heaven’s fragrance everywhere pure emptiness,
I sit silent. It’s still, the entire Buddha-realm in a hair’s breadth, mind-depths all bottomless clarity, in which vast kalpas begin and end out of nowhere.

In my Heritage classes, I explain these poems in terms of personal as well as national achievement and loss. In “Night Thought”—an early Li Po poem—I emphasize the positive spiritualism of the poem. Daoist aspects of nature—Hu Creek, moon, Heaven’s fragrance—converge with Buddhist concepts of the transcendental—pure emptiness, heaven’s music, kalpas. In stillness and silence, Li Po perceives the pulse of the universe, the boundlessness of the spirit. He is enlightened. Rooted in the depth of this knowledge is the spirituality that gives such insight and power to his poetry. His path is clear: follow the Yangzi north to his destiny in Chang’an, where his poetry would astound the Tang court, and his fame would spread throughout the empire. He was young, ambitious and confident. Opportunity was as boundless as the Tao; as infinite as the Buddha.

After attaining the height of glory he sought, however, the following poem reveals the depths to which he falls.

On Phoenix Tower in Chin-ling

In its travels, the phoenix stopped at Phoenix Tower,
but soon left the tower empty, the river flowing away.
Blossoms and grasses burying the paths of an [sic] Wu palace,
Chin’s capped and robed nobles all ancient
Li Po wrote this poem after being officially exiled. The poetic account of his slow journey begins at Jinling, present-day Nanjing. Li Po uses the absence of the Phoenix, which appears in times of peace and harmony, to indicate the chaotic state of the Tang Dynasty. Moreover, he compares his own futile career to those of other righteous, duty-bound officials of the past—now only “ancient gravemounds”—meaningless and all but forgotten. At present, he is as cut off from his life and destiny as floating mountain peaks and midstream islands. His future is “all drifting clouds and shrouded sun” of uncertainty. The greatness of Chang’an that once was his is now impossibly far away. “And so begins grief”—for himself and for the Tang.

These are both complex poems with many obscure references for Western students. However, as in all great poetry, though the context may be culturally specific, the emotional content is universal. Given clear explanations of specific Chinese symbols and general historical backgrounds, students find Li Po accessible and engaging. Many students are moved and enlightened by these poems. They readily sympathize with Li Po’s thwarted ambition, lost opportunity, and social isolation, and his poetry sparks lively discussion transcending cultural, spatial and temporal borders.

As my History Department course in Asian Civilization entered into discussion of the Tang Dynasty, I was eager to draw on my students’ previous exposure to Li Po to enliven my dry historical lectures. When asked what they remembered about Li Po from their various Heritage instructors, I was shocked to hear the same general comments from my students: “He was a drunk.” “He drowned trying to grab the reflection of the moon.” “He was boring.” “What little I did read of his poems, I didn’t understand.” When pressed for further details about his life or about the Tang dynasty, they could provide none. Not because they had forgotten the details, but because they had never learned them in the first place. One student related her experience with Li Po as less than “intensive.” The instructor (from physical sciences) invited his students for a coffee and recitation session. Students were required to pick one poem, read it aloud, and offer some insight into its meaning or significance. That was it. He provided no historical or cultural background; students simply ignored obscure references. And this was a common experience. As one instructor confidentially confessed to me, “I use the text only as a vehicle for writing assignments.” Given this minimalist approach to Chinese culture, it should not come as a surprise that students gain only a superficial understanding of Li Po’s poetry. Nor should it come as a surprise that one of China’s greatest poets is reduced, in the students’ memories, to a clumsy drunk who drowns grasping at the moon’s reflection.

Western instructors—far outside their fields of interest and knowledge, pressed for time and overwhelmed by work—present this required Asian text from a learned but not informed perspective. But what is being taught here? What is being learned? Are the students being encouraged, as program guidelines state, to “enter the realms of other cultures and individuals”? Or are they, as outsiders, merely “observing” a two-dimensional, Western representation of an “Asian culture” imagined by their instructors? What these instructors do not know or understand, they tend to label as different, mysterious, exotic, inscrutable, or spiritual. Thus, they continue to perpetuate—not dispel—Western stereotypes of Asia.

Indeed, contrary to the intentions of the program, the Western stereotype of Asia is reinforced during the program’s occasional “cultural discovery” days, when outside speakers are invited to present demonstrations to enhance student understanding of Asian culture. Demonstrations have included yoga, feng shui, bonsai, and meditation. True, these are all aspects of Asian culture, but should not be considered central components. They do not provide insight into more fundamental cultural characteristics such as duty and destiny, Confucian ethics, family loyalty, community obligations, or cultural chauvinism. They do not make Li Po more accessible. Rather, they reinforce the Western view of Asia as a decidedly more exotic culture, and thus, fundamentally different from the West.

Do required Asian programs taught by non-specialists have a place in college curricula? Perhaps. However, program coordinators must recognize the inherent problems of cross-cultural education and address these problems through comprehensive faculty development. If instructors do not work to acquire a basic understanding of Asian history, society, politics and religion, they—like Pinkerton in Madame Butterfly—will continue to “exoticize” the unknown to the detriment of both their students and of Asian studies. Rather than enhancing knowledge of Asia, and encouraging students to pursue other classes in Asian studies, they may frustrate or disillusion students, and turn them away from such courses. However, I am also confident that properly trained non-specialists can competently teach the intricacies and nuances of Li Po’s poetry, and open up to themselves and their students, fresh, non-traditional insights into life, death and other ageless human concerns.

NOTES
3 Li Po, p. 91.
*Daniel Meissner was on the faculty at Carthage College when he presented this paper.
Making It Happen

In the Spring of 1999, the director of the IPE program requested resources from the UPS Presidential Discretionary Fund for a summer IPE faculty seminar devoted to developing a theme for the IPE 201 course. The goal of integrating a theme topic was to design a set of classroom and campus experiences meant to define for our students the meaning, relevance, and timeliness of IPE. Prospective participants in the summer seminar decided that the Asian financial crisis would make a perfect choice as the theme topic.

For several hours on five consecutive days, nine faculty members from the departments of Comparative Sociology, Economics, and Politics and Government met to discuss various features of the Asian crisis. Individual chapters of the IPE 201 textbook—which was written by members of the IPE program at UPS—provided the angles from which each of us could address the Asian crisis. Accordingly, seminar participants tackled issues such as the IMF role in the crisis, the impact of the crisis on agriculture, the theoretical underpinnings of the crisis, and the Malaysian example of economic nationalism. My task was to put a “human face” on the crisis in order to show students the social, cultural, and environmental dimensions of the crisis and, more importantly, to show students how their lives are intertwined with the lives of those affected by the crisis throughout Asia. In the weeks following the conclusion of the summer seminar, participants gave the IPE director their contributions, usually in the form of written capsules that were then posted on a special website devoted to our Asian crisis theme (www.ups.edu/ipe/asiacrisis/). The website features twelve links, which combine individual capsules prepared by the nine seminar participants with other pertinent websites and articles.

In addition to the website, what united all sections of the IPE 201 course was a list of speakers and events. In the first week of each semester, every IPE 201 student attended a presentation on the human face of the Asian crisis in which I introduced eight personal stories from Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand. This presentation was meant to demonstrate the personal and human dimensions of IPE, and by allowing students to meet the IPE faculty, to meet each other, and to become comfortable and familiar with the meaning of IPE, the presentation succeeded in bringing IPE to life via compelling stories from throughout Asia. During the course of the entire academic year, IPE and Asian Studies sponsored several speakers related to the Asian crisis theme. First, Victoria Beard of the Rand Corporation discussed the social consequences of, and political opportunities created by, the Indonesian monetary crisis. Having just returned from conducting research in Yogyakarta, Dr. Beard was able to give an accurate and up-to-date look at the impacts of the crisis on individuals and households.

Eamonn Fingleton, former editor for the Financial Times and Forbes, was our second speaker. In his talk, entitled “In Praise of Hard Industries: Why Manufacturing, Not the Information Economy, is the Key to Prosperity,” Mr. Fingleton argued that, as with Japan’s industrial success story, the
Asian crisis illustrates the need for manufacturing-based industry and foreign direct, or "real," investment. Third, James Fallows, national political commentator, author, and former editor of Atlantic Monthly and US News and World Report, revisited a previous presentation at UPS several years ago by discussing the topic of "Setting Sun: Reflections on the Asian Crisis." Finally, towards the end of the year, Professor Jomo Kwame Sundaram from the University of Malaysia presented "Paper Tigers in Southeast Asia? Beyond Miracle and Debacle," while Professor Walden Bello from the University of The Philippines spoke about the "Rise, Crisis, and Future of East Asia's Economies." Both Jomo and Bello gave detailed analyses of the events leading up to, and immediately following, the onset of the Asian crisis in July, 1997. These two final presentations rounded out the theme year nicely, especially since many students commented on how surprised and impressed they were with the depth of knowledge gained in just a matter of months.

SUCCESSES

Overall, the project of integrating Asian Studies into the liberal arts curriculum through the IPE program proved successful on many levels. Below, I list both the successes and the crucial ingredients needed for those successes:

- The project brought an awareness of Asian Studies, and issues related to Asia, to a large number of students. In two semesters, over 350 students (out of 600 total sophomores at UPS) enrolled in one of six sections of IPE 201, and the majority of these students were not majors in IPE or related fields such as economics, politics and government, comparative sociology, or business. For me, the ultimate measure of success was hearing biology and occupational therapy majors debating with one another, with insight and determination, outside of class over whether the Asian crisis was caused by greedy investors or corrupt crony capitalists. A crucial ingredient here was the large number of sections of IPE offered. By integrating an Asian theme into a required, and popular, introductory course such as IPE 201, we ensured that a maximum number of students would be exposed to our Asian theme.

- As indicated already, a key goal of this project was to stimulate interest early in IPE, and to chip away at the intimidation that some students felt at the beginning of the course. A clear indication that we achieved this goal was the 36 percent increase in the number of IPE majors in just the past year. The Asian crisis theme also provided continuity in academic programming for the University of Puget Sound since our list of speakers and events brought together students and faculty from across the campus. The three crucial ingredients behind our success in generating intellectual excitement for both IPE and UPS were faculty commitment, efficient organization, and the use of a common text. By limiting participation in the summer seminar to a handful of interested faculty members, we ensured that only those with the time, interest, and commitment to the theme idea would participate. Having a seminar convener, in this case the IPE director, with good web and organizational skills helped keep the seminar focused and efficient. Lastly, the use of the same text among all instructors of IPE 201 guaranteed continuity and facilitated the integration of common topics, readings, and internet resources (such as the web links mentioned earlier).

- The theme year succeeded in fostering rewarding faculty and program cooperation and collaboration. Many faculty members shared readings or provided relevant research materials to others focusing on other "modules" or aspects of the Asian crisis. The existing bridge between the IPE and Asian Studies programs created by common faculty members was further strengthened as well. The Henry Luce Foundation, which in 1998 created the interdisciplinary position that I hold, was essential in this cross-program collaboration since the position was created for exactly the kind of interdisciplinary approach evident in our incorporation of the Asian crisis into IPE courses. Further, the strength of IPE and Asian Studies, as individual interdisciplinary programs, greatly bolstered the chances of successful collaboration. In short, the whole proved even greater than the sum of the individual parts.

LESSONS

Although everyone involved with the theme year considered it a success, we also identified several areas of possible improvement for the next theme year, scheduled for the 2001-2002 academic year. First, the timing of the speakers did not always correspond well to the content being covered that particular week in our courses. Of course, coordinating six sections of a course is difficult in a liberal arts school, where flexibility and curricular freedom lend themselves poorly to a standardized course schedule. Further, fitting speakers into specific weeks of a semester is difficult in practice. Nevertheless, greater coordination of speaker dates with course material would have enhanced the relevance and timeliness of our theme year events.

Second, there was a sense among some students of "Asia fatigue." After several months of learning, reading, and hearing about the Asian crisis, some students commented that we had perhaps committed overkill of the theme. Having said that, however, we decided that it is better that students become sick of talking about Asia than not talking about Asia at all. Third, using current events for pedagogical purposes, and a yearlong theme in particular, is always risky since pressing issues quickly become dated as the media move along to the next hot topic. Convincing students that the consequences of the Asian crisis were still ongoing and relevant, despite not making headlines, was challenging, but most of us overcame this problem by illustrating the ways in which the Asian crisis related to many timeless dilemmas of international political economy. Finally, a common text was useful, but a set of supplemental readings would have also allowed further coordination between the different sections of IPE 201. One suggestion was for the seminar participants
to write topical summaries which could then be compiled for a course reader.

In conclusion, our efforts to integrate Asian Studies into the liberal arts curriculum were perceived by those participating, and by many in the UPS community, as a success. To those of us who teach in both IPE and Asian Studies, the experience reaffirmed not only the value of studying and understanding Asia, but also the value of building bridges between two dynamic interdisciplinary programs with committed faculty and clearly defined goals.

The Co-curricular Initiative: Integrating Asian Studies into the Liberal Arts Curriculum at Trinity College

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Trinity College

In 1998, Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut began a curricular experiment which, by the accounts of the participants, including students and faculty members of the College, the Hartford community, and scholars and artists from outside, has had considerable success in bringing the studies of different areas outside of the United States to the attention of Trinity undergraduates. This experiment is introduced in the following paragraphs from an Asianist point of view. Readers wishing more information are directed to a paper written by Dario Euraque, "Multidisciplinarity and Cross-Cultural Study in the Liberal Arts College of the 21st Century". Euraque is a Latin-American historian at Trinity, and director of the curricular experiment in its first two years.

First of all, some background about the teaching about Asia at Trinity College. Asian Studies is one of the six concentrations housed under the International Studies Program, together with African, Russian, Latin American, Comparative Development, and Middle Eastern Studies. While changes will result in wider diversity in the near future, historically the College has not been particularly international in its student body. As if to compensate, Hartford has a sizable population with an international heritage and connections. In recent years Trinity has made significant progress in building links with the community. In this context there are plenty of opportunities for Asia specialists to reach to larger audiences. In addition to the International Studies Program, which provides the curricular framework for the teaching of Asia, Trinity has put other institutional structures in place. The College regularly organizes special events and Asia specialists are always invited to participate. For example, we had a conference on race and ethnicity last year, and I delivered a paper in which I discussed racial tension in Huang Chun-ming’s stories in the context of racism in different parts of the world.

As valuable as these opportunities are to me as a researcher, for students they may amount to no more than one of the many events that take place in a school year. As such, they are like any "event" in that they can be described as top-down, one-way transmission of knowledge. There is little student involvement apart from showing up at the right place at the right time (and sometimes not even at the right time). We all have had the experience of being "evented-out," where we as teachers tire ourselves out by organizing event after event that are attended by only a handful, and often the same handful, of students. For the most part this sort of reaching out is similar to preaching to the converted. The believers appreciate the effort, but the non-believers remain as indifferent as ever.

Officially named the Co-curricular Initiative, this experiment tries to take advantage of the space between the curricular and the extra-curricular with the hope of bypassing the pitfalls of mere "events" described above. Perhaps a description of the substance of the Initiative will explain how that is done. Using as an example last year’s theme, entitled "Migrations, Diasporic Communities, and Transnational Identities," the Initiative featured a faculty lecture series, a film series, occasional arts performances and exhibitions, an on-line discussion forum, special guest speakers, and a scholarly conference at the end of the year. In addition, the Initiative selected a cluster of introductory and advanced level courses, and a special independent study course that students could take in conjunction with other activities in the series. On average the Initiative sponsored one or two events a week which were open to the College as well as the broader community. Discussions triggered by these events were then carried out by electronic means, in the context of regular classes, and through independent study courses in the curriculum.

There are several noteworthy things in the design of the Co-curricular Initiative. First of all, the avowed goal of the steering committee was to make the series as multidisciplinary as possible, which was contingent upon the choice of the topic and the willingness of the college members to participate. A glance at the topics of the Co-curricular Initiatives so far, “Decolonization” in 1998, “Diaspora” in 1999, and “Millennium” in 2000, indicates that the topics are of such global dimension that different disciplines, including the sciences, have insights to share. In fact, the steering committee was initially concerned that the science constituent of the college might feel left out from this campus-wide initiative which, on the surface, seems to favor the arts, humanities and social sciences. However, the scientists did us proud, contributing presentations to the “Diaspora” series such as “The First Diaspora: The Peopling of the Globe by Humans and their Ancestors” by a biologist; “Modeling the Spread of Disease in Populations” by a mathematician; and “Global Warming and Future Migrations” by chemistry students.

Even when the topic is right, for the initiative to succeed the faculty members have to be willing to take on extra work with no compensation, slight recognition, and a large amount of aggravation. Considering its scale, the
Initiative operated on a shoestring budget of $25,000, the bulk of which went to transportation and honoraria for outside speakers, film rentals, and operational costs for the conference. Trinity colleagues devoted their time and energy pro bono.

To motivate students and to counteract their passivity to "top-down, one-way transmission of knowledge," the Diaspora series sought to involve students in a number of ways. The most important was that all events were student-led. As event hosts, students had to research the topic, study the work of the speakers or guests, introduce and summarize issues for the audience, and lead discussions. Admittedly, the number of student-hosts was small relative to the college population of about 2,000 students. However, by their example these students presented to their peers models of engaged and active intellectual endeavors outside the classroom.

What is the role of Asian Studies in this multidisciplinary endeavor? Let me use my own involvement in the Diaspora series as an example. In the first semester I recommended the Hong Kong film "Tian Mi Mi" (Comrade, Almost a Love Story) to the film committee. I wrote a short synopsis of the film, which was placed on the Diaspora web site, and provided sources of information about the film to the student host (not an Asian Studies major) who was responsible for presenting the film. I did not attend the screening, but the discussion apparently went very well. Afterwards, I received e-mail inquiries about the film from students, many of whom, as far as I know, had not taken any class about Asia before.

In the second semester, I appeared on a panel with two colleagues. My topic was "Chinese Diasporic Memoirs in the U.S." The other two papers, given by Michael Lestz and Vijay Prashad, were about the situation of indigenous peoples of South Taiwan in the face of influx of Mainland Chinese, and the 1913-1916 rebellion against indenture in the Indian diaspora, respectively. A student from my Chinese class assumed the role of host and moderator. Interestingly, most questions came from the non-Asian studies contingent among the audience, and discussion also continued electronically afterwards.

The third task that I performed for the Diaspora series was to direct two one-half credit independent study courses. One of these involved an English major who took my Chinese literature class in conjunction with the Diaspora series. What that meant was that in addition to following the course syllabus like other students, she did extra work, including an independent project that explored an issue of the Chinese diaspora. After consultation, we agreed that in order for her to earn that half credit, her assignments would include 1) attending at least nine events (about two-thirds of the total in the fall semester) of the Diaspora series, 2) keeping a journal about the events she attended, with insights and questions, 3) participating in on-line discussions with at least one lengthy entry a week, 4) developing a teaching plan for the session on Chinese diaspora in my course, teach that class, and submit a report after the class.

That a student could anchor his/her participation in the Diaspora events to a course in the regular curriculum, I think, best exemplifies the strength of the Co-curricular Initiative. There were more than thirty such courses, and sixteen students took advantage of them. I referred earlier to the lukewarm attitude of students toward individual "events," and we also understand that it is an uphill battle to convince a liberal arts college of the importance of integrating the teaching of Asia into the general curriculum. Perhaps, then, an arrangement such as Trinity's Co-curricular Initiative, whereby Asianists join colleagues in other disciplines in a cluster of events focusing on a global issue, is another way of promoting Asian studies in the liberal arts setting.

NOTES

Five Steps
Joan E. Ericson
The Colorado College

Integrating Asian Studies into the Liberal Arts curriculum at Colorado College is part of the process of "internationalization," a principal goal for our institution identified by President Kathryn Mohrman. The mandate of internationalization has helped to facilitate the efforts of the Asian Studies program to build linkages and alliances across the curriculum. Our program has been quite successful, frankly, because we are opportunistic, flexible and practical: we sought to build on what was already in place, to always connect with interests and courses of other faculty across the disciplinary, and even divisional, divide. We've made a special effort to connect with colleagues in the natural sciences by supporting opportunities for them to travel, research and build their own networks through our Asia-partners program. Rather than rely on courses in areas of our own specialties, we've tried to bridge and facilitate, and often to underplay the claims of Asian exceptionalism, without losing what is exceptional, even uniquely so, among things Asian.

The focus of my remarks will be to outline "five steps" that I have used or proposed at Colorado College, steps that might be easily replicated in other institutional environments. I should confess that we have benefited from the mandate of "internationalization" as well as an enviable endowment (one that makes Asia-partners, among many other programs, possible). But our general strategy, to integrate Asian Studies into the liberal arts and avoid isolation or marginalization, requires not so much resources, however much these may help, but a willingness to embrace the college-wide directives and mandates—make the trend your friend—and make colleagues in other fields see the vitality...
Asian traditions that merit serious consideration and emulation. Readings about wholly unanticipated dynamics in Japan.

broader spectrum of students who might not otherwise be enticed into our introductory courses.

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The campus-wide symposium celebrating the 125th anniversary of the College in 1999 focused, in considerable measure, on a comparison of Confucian legacies in East Asia with the Western liberal tradition. Tu Wei-ming, Li Zehou and Roger Ames helped to formulate an Asianist challenge to claims of Western exceptionalism, if not superiority, put forward by Samuel Huntington, and to raise an awareness within the college as a whole of the depth and coherence of Asian traditions that merit serious consideration and emulation.

The willingness of the Asian Studies Committee to connect with these recent college-wide initiatives maintains the visibility of our program for students and colleagues alike.

TEAM TEACH

One of the strategies for survival under the block plan (Colorado College’s approach to teach one course at a time, meeting daily, for three-and-a-half weeks) is to join forces with colleagues in topics of mutual interest. Team-teaching is recommended by senior faculty as a necessary prescription for sanity under the block plan, but the benefits are considerable, besides always having at least one other person who laughs at your jokes, and should be emulated elsewhere. Dialogues between faculty, in class and out, helps to cement good working relations and, usually, personal friendships among our Asian Studies peers. It is also a chance to get to know others outside one’s immediate departmental or programmatic circle, in an environment that’s far more pleasant and stimulating than campus-wide committees.

TEACH TO FACULTY

The intellectual culture at Colorado College among faculty is sustained, in part, by a series of seminars, most of which are targeted to cross-disciplinary interests, and at which many of us at asked to take a turn at the bat. For the Women’s Studies seminar on presenting new videos for teaching forms of feminism, I showed the Japanese documentary “Looking for Fumiko” and enjoyed presenting a periodization of the movement in Japan that departed in significant ways from the North American dynamics. The visibility of and differences among “International Feminisms” will be further explored in the Associated Colleges of the Midwest Women’s Studies Conference “Integrating Global Feminism into the Women’s Studies Curriculum,” hosted at Colorado College in February 2001, where our short-term Korean visiting faculty will address the particularities of and prospects for Asian Feminism.

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Asian Women Writers

The Three Bears:
Teaching Asian Women Authors
Shailj
da Sharma
De Paul University

I don’t know how representative my experience is, but when I teach, I get two kinds of pressure from my students: one, that I teach a certain small “percentage” of women authors, perhaps in order to satisfy some inner affirmative action chart; and second, that these women authors be the course’s spokeswomen for the inner domestic world of emotions, feelings, soul. If they don’t cover those constituencies, they are not worthy. This is exacerbated in interesting ways when the authors are Asian or Asian-American. The easiest way to explain it is to say that within the context of Asian women authors, the ethnic imperative gets articulated as an assumption to reveal or expose a “problem,” to which they, the audience, are the answer. The readers perform this function by 1) being the representative of a rational, advanced, society from which such problems are absent, and 2) applying the tools of reason and empathy, and thus taking care the Manichean rules of living.

A second reaction arises when the text resists efforts to be positioned as a victim, unwilling to be rescued. It is then often accused of being dense, hard or even uninteresting. This dichotomy points to an interesting problem: the attempt to teach narratives by Asian authors without making pity, or to position them correctly, an ability to read them in both historically and certainly geographically from the primary texts’ primary audience (which is not always the case) and thus taking care the Manichean rules of living.

What we lose in such a reading is the ability to position them correctly, an ability to read them in their context, not just from within the space my students inhabit. In an uncharitable light, this can be read as patronizing, but in the context of problems in pedagogy, it highlights a need to reposition the texts we teach. It’s not that there is an absolute divide between Asian audiences who may have been the texts’ primary audience (which is not always the case) and the American audience which is reading it now, distanced both historically and certainly geographically from the primary space of reading. I think it is important to recognize that, given the way publishing markets are structured now, especially for authors who write in English, books address a variety of readers: Asian, English, American, European, African. This throws a wrench in any effort to read “purely.”

Let me offer three examples of sources, one that offers itself easily to be positioned within historical North-South relations as “pathetic”; another which resists by self-reflexively examining the politics of reading, but then reiterating not the pathos, but the lure of the exotic in reading about Asian women; and a third, the film Fire, which tries to avoid those pitfalls.

1. Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine is a popular undergraduate text. It occupies the genre of immigrant arrival; the protagonist arrives in the U.S. fleeing religious and gender prosecution and finds redemption here. Mukherjee falsifies history, and her protagonist keeps her distance from other Indian immigrants, seeing them as “ghettoized.” Jasmine, the eponymous heroine, goes West in the traditional way, stopping for a while in Iowa where she is taken for Greek and an “Indian goddess.” Sexual liberation follows like a chimera, but ultimately she sees it as a false lure and escapes out the window. The novel plays on the theme of the erotic exotic, the heroine’s ability to find men who are willing to play the protector in return for sexual access is seen as liberation. Since its publication in 1987, this has quickly become a favorite text for undergraduate introductory courses.

So the question is: What does this text accomplish? I argue that it reflects a flattering portrait of the myth of America back to its readers, as a land of opportunity, freedom, sexual and financial liberation, and it taps into many easy myths that students can find and celebrate. But what is troubling about it is that in doing so, it reinforces many other stereotypes about Indian femininity. The typical Indian woman, according to this novel, is easily led, married at a young age to a man she hardly knows, and can passively attract men from a broad range of ethnicities. There is no attempt on Mukherjee’s part to make class, caste or period distinctions. She ignores the virulent racism that Indians face in America, and through working the metaphor of “sati” and rebirth into her novel, she plays on the worst clichés about India.

2. Trinh T. Minh-ha’s Woman, Native, Other is my next example. A non-fiction book, drawing partly on her travel and filmmaking in Vietnam, India and parts of West Africa, the text begins as a rigorous examination of the way in which readers triply marginalize postcolonial women authors. Then the text performs an interesting flip as Minh-ha begins to privilege aspects of women’s narrative: she cites oral storytelling, female legacies of stories, and the role of narratives in healing and community which are passed down through generations in Africa. Suddenly the arbitrary divide between genders that audiences have been encouraged to oppose is being reinscribed, albeit as one that is POSITIVE and in danger of being lost in industrial society. The attempt by Minh-ha to recapture a pure or true woman’s narrative by going back to pre-industrial society can easily slip back into a glorified third-worldism while ignoring the links between the viewer who seeks to preserve this vanishing society and the poor, underprivileged subjects who might not want to remain in their place.

As a teacher, what troubles me more is that such a move re-inscribes the distance between the worlds instead of showing complicity. Am I the only one who is afraid of this dichotomy? Why is it necessary to perform this nostalgic elegy for a vanishing world? Perhaps the answer is that it is
aesthetically more satisfying to depict a world captured at the moment of its passing. This is borne out by the photographs in the text which tend to fetishize the female figure in its rural, handicraft-bedecked surroundings. What happens to the urban hyperliterate Asian woman, is she not authentic enough? This again reinforces the idea that a proper mode of reading for these “backward” societies is along the continuum of modernism and industrialization, whether it is done positively or negatively. Frankly they are not that far distant from each other.

3. My last example is the film Fire, made by an Indo-Canadian director, Deepa Mehta. Broadly speaking, the film’s subject is patriarchy, and the burning of wives in India, in particular. However, when the film was released, it was hyped as a film about “Indian lesbians.” By all accounts then, it is a film that deals with some pretty controversial subjects. There are many available readings of the film. One was the popular “redneck” Indian conservative view: that the film sensationalizes something that just doesn’t exist in India, and in doing so, it insults Indian (read Hindu) culture. The second view, which was more widespread in reviews and responses in the U.S. was that Mehta is finally revealing a shameful secret that Indians don’t want to admit to: the existence of lesbianism in India. There is a third reading which doesn’t get much airtime: that Mehta presents a complex view of class and patriarchy. The wives of the two brothers, who eventually become lovers, do so because it is the only form of agency available to them. Desire functions as a form of agency and subjectivity. But this view doesn’t appeal since it doesn’t tap into the narrative of oppression, freedom, sympathy, and complexity. The ambivalent reaction of the character played by Shabana Azmi (the elder daughter-in-law) to the love she feels for her friend and lover is glossed over. But the kind of reading I’m arguing for resists the simple impulse of pity and superiority on the part of the viewer. In doing so, it complicates the distance that “Orientalized” readings bring to Asian texts.

What can we as teachers do to allow texts to be read in complex ways? Certainly an easy answer is to include history, history and yet more history. But what I also find useful is a discussion of audiences, and a critical debate on the politics of publishing and film audiences, perhaps by having students read reviews from more than one country. This allows them to see that there can be more than one reading of a text, not just on the basis of individual interpretation, but in ways that have to do with political positions, gender, nationality, class and sexual orientation.

SOURCES

Cloth of Gold
China, after A.D. 1220
Lampas weave, silk and gold thread
The Cleveland Museum of Art
Technology and Teaching:
Where are we? Where are we going?
How do we get there?

Web Pages and Teaching
James Lochtefeld
Carthage College

OVERVIEW
In the beginning, I had a hard drive. I used my computer to translate texts to use in class, and I wrote some introductory texts of my own. I stored these texts on my hard drive, and when the need came, I printed them out and made copies for students. And it was good.

Then, I had e-mail. Instead of printing texts, having them copied, and handing them out, I sent them to students by e-mail. E-mail needed less lead time than copying, which was very good, but it still required timely planning, not to mention students keeping their mailboxes empty, both of which were not always very good.

So in January 1997, I made a web page. It is always available (presuming the network is running), it can be updated at will, and it is seemingly easy for students to find and use. It was good then, and it is still good.

The allusions here to Genesis 1 are not just because I teach religion, but also because there are parallels between these two creative acts. Just as Genesis describes creation as a step-by-step process, in the same way my web page gradually took form. I didn’t create it all at once—now, that task would be overwhelming—but instead built it page by page, which I’m convinced is the only way to do this on one’s own.

The web page began, simply enough, with course materials stored on my hard drive, and at first I didn’t use it very effectively. My first web syllabus (Islam, Spring 1997) was essentially identical to my hard copy, with no active links. In mid-fall 1997 (East Asian Religion) I realized I could link my site to other websites, and that semester such links were mainly to images. In 1998-1999 (Buddhism and Hinduism) I worked on using more electronic texts (some of which came from my web page), a trend also visible in a regularly offered introductory course (Religion 100), which last semester had on-line reading about one day out of every three.

USES
Although the web page does have some pictures of my children (as a way to help show students who I “am”), I have always seen its primary function as pedagogical—to provide resources for students and for myself. One way it has done this has been through on-line readings, which have given me much greater range, especially for primary texts. I can assign the introduction to the Kama Sutra, or the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, without having to go through the entire text (or making students buy it). Needless to say, on-line readings have to be evaluated for veracity and utility, but this isn’t much different from what I do with printed texts.

Another bonus has been greater accessibility to images. Web links can give students access to anything from Shingon Buddhist Mandalas (www.asunam.com/mandara_worlds.htm) to Arabic Calligraphy (www.islamicart.com/main/calligraphy/styles/index.htm). I am also (gradually) creating on-line galleries from my own pictures. These images can either be viewed on a computer by individual students, or they can be projected in the classroom. In some ways, this latter use simply replaces an older technology (the slide projector) with a newer one, but the new technology has several advantages: there’s no longer any risk of damaging my slides, I save time by not having to arrange slides and put them away, and I can intersperse my own pictures with ones drawn from outside sites. So far I’ve done galleries relating to Hinduism and Islam, and will put one together this summer for a Buddhism class next fall.

Using a web page has dramatically reduced the amount of paper that I hand out to students. Two years ago my class syllabi were fifteen pages long, but now they are down to four: a printed version of the home page for that particular class, which appears just as students will see it on the web, my criteria for grading (which I want them to see in hard copy), and a copy of the reading list (which they will use often enough that I feel I should give it to them). This arrangement does make students responsible for knowing the site, but I believe in giving students responsibility. Having the syllabus on the web has also allowed me to post additional resources for students, such as an academic honesty section with concrete examples of plagiarism (www.carthage.edu/~lochtefe/plagiarism.html), to which I refer while discussing plagiarism in class. These expanded resources also means that I can be stricter in my demands and expectations.

Another web page benefit is publicity, such as for my January 1999 trip to India (www.carthage.edu/~lochtefe/
indiajterm.html). The web pages for this trip included a daily itinerary, and links to pictures of the places we would visit. After we got back I asked the students to write reviews of the trip, and I linked these (unedited) testimonials to a group photo. For January 2001 I have made some minor changes, such as adding health-related information, and I've already gotten good response from students, including an e-mail from an incoming student, who would not have known about this otherwise.

TECHNICAL “STUFF”

So how did I learn to do this? I got started by my Classicist colleague, Christine Renaud, who gave me a copy of one web page on a floppy disk, some cheat sheets for HTML language, and who was generous with her time in answering questions. I then began to encode my files, which was tedious and painstaking, but not terribly difficult. The need to know HTML language pretty much disappeared once I began to work in Microsoft Word, since this program will save files in HTML format. I don’t bother using a web editing program (e.g., Frontpage), but rather use Word for 95% of my work—cutting and pasting web files is no different from any other file. For intensive work with photos, such as setting up some new pages in the photo gallery, I use Netscape Communicator, in which my limited ability is felicitously matched by my limited objectives. If you want to get started, many colleges offer web page seminars or tutorials, and it also helps to befriend your institution’s webmaster.

As with any other computerized venture, everything must be carefully backed up, and the backup kept somewhere else. I nearly learned this the hard way in August 1999, when the server containing my web page essentially blew up, and I didn’t have any backup. The computer center managed to recover an older version of the page, but since then I have kept a complete copy in an archive on my hard drive. This archive also gives protection should my website ever get hacked (which hasn’t happened yet, but could). A different sort of concern was for my on-line images. After learning how easy it is to take images from the web (and getting requests from honest people for permission to use some of mine), I took the time to learn how to “brand” my photos with my website address, so that people could be led back to my site, wherever the photo appears.

Some features have remained unchanged since the beginning, such as the nine-cell “road map” on the opening page. Most individual pages open with a two-column table, in which there is a photo or image on the left side, and the page’s title on the right (this also helps to create a uniform “look”). My original design had the page’s table of contents below this opening table, but after I got tired of having to scroll down the page every time, I began putting the table of contents directly under the title in the opening table, where they are immediately accessible. Another change—making a link to my main page part of my standard footer—came after my brother found one of my subsidiary pages, but was unable to get to my home page. Thus the page’s form keeps slowly changing, as continued use points out better ways of doing things.

As with any technology, one faces continual choices, as well as the danger of becoming a servant to it. I have consciously decided to keep my site simple—hence the choice of a plain white background, which I like aesthetically, and against which text shows up nicely. Although each subject area has a page of web links, these links get updated every other year, before the course connected with them is offered. Family pictures get changed once a year, at the end of the summer. I could spend much more time doing website maintenance, but I don’t want to—as a sadhu I knew in India used to say, “It is for me, I am not for it.” And it can be for you, too. Please feel free visit the site at www.carthage.edu/~lochtefe/ and to use what will help you.

9th Annual
ASIANetwork Conference
DEADLINES

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Friday, March 30
Send check or money order to
Dr. Van J. Symons, Executive Director
ASIANetwork
Augustana College
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Rock Island, IL 61201-2296

Hotel Reservations
Sunday, April 1
1-877-865-5324

See page 7 for further details
Teaching Vietnam: The Country and the War

Theory to Praxis:
The Way We Teach Our Daughters
About the Vietnam War
James T. Gillam
Spelman College

I teach Asian history at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. By training, I am a specialist in the traditional and modern history of China and Japan. However, since the faculty at Spelman is small, and my Academic Dean thinks that serving in the Vietnam War qualifies me as an expert in Vietnamese history, I have developed an area of study outside my graduate school comfort zone. This extra area of competence has taken the form of a course on the history of Vietnam from the colonial era to 1991.

I have given guest lectures on Vietnam and the war we fought there at all-male schools like Morehouse College, and coeducational schools like The Ohio State University. The pedagogy I use in those places is the old fashioned, read the books, give the lectures and hold discussion pattern. Under the best of circumstances, most of the students do the reading, and a few of the men dominate the discussion. At OSU, I attributed the lack of female participation to lack of preparation. There may have been some of that. Yet when I began to teach about the war to Spelman’s female student body, some of the responses I received on papers and in discussions from my best students brought me up short. They forced me to recognize that women are shaped to different gender roles than men, and consequently, they have a culture that is different from that of men. Those differences meant that if I was to be an effective teacher of the war to the women at Spelman I would have to make some important changes I the way I teach this subject. This sample of some of the mistakes that I see in the way boys and girls play. There is a peculiar part of male gendering and role playing that requires boys to pretend to kill, or at least dominate something or someone. Conversely, females practice the skills of personal diplomacy and nurturing. These differences in gender conditioning mean that women and men come to accept certain attributes as desirable and understandable on a visceral level long before they get to my class. This helps partially explain why, for example, many women accept intelligence, attractiveness, and the ability for nurturing as desirable attributes. Men, on the other hand, find it acceptable, if not actually desirable, to be seen as tough guys that have a killer instinct.

This is not to say that women are incapable of mastering the larger issues of history, culture, economics and diplomacy that are part of the Vietnam War. Once they get started, they do as well as any of my male students. In fact, they seem to negotiate the diplomatic maze of the war faster and more successfully than many of the men I have taught. Yet, many of them report confusion when they see a unit designation such as “4th Div. 1/22.” They quickly tumble to the idea that “Div.” means a division, which is a large unit of soldiers. But almost to a woman, they mistake the battalion and regimental designation of “1/22” as a fraction for something unexplainably military that is probably not important. There are other things too. For many of them the word “Tracks” means footprints on the ground. Or, most of them are astounded to find out that a rifle can be gas operated and that the entire cartridge does not leave the barrel of a weapon when it is fired.

The mastery of these kinds of minuitia is not needed to understand the historical issues of the Vietnam War. Yet my students demand to be held in their own in the male dominated society outside the gates of Spelman. Perhaps they don’t need to know that “Tracks” are tanks and armored personnel carriers. But, they do need to know that the failure to create enough expanding gasses from the cordite in an M-16 cartridge was the primary cause for the failure of the rifles our government issued to its soldiers in Vietnam. Technical details like that lead to larger discussions of morality and war, or more pointedly, they lead to talk of the responsibility of our military industrial complex. For these reasons, I try to prepare my students by exposing them to both the study of Asia, and the mostly male specialty of war.

In pursuit of these objectives, I have adopted three basic pedagogical tools. The first and second tools are the parceled classroom technique, and the use of writing across the curriculum. I learned both these methods in a faculty development seminar from Professor Jacqueline Royster, late of Spelman College, and currently on faculty at The Ohio State University. My other tool is the problem posing method of education. It is a style of teaching made famous by the Brazilian educational specialist Paulo Freire in his book Pedagogy of the Oppressed. The parceled classroom technique
requires that students become active agents in their own education through group responsibility and writing. The problem posing pedagogy requires that the uncritical withdrawal of knowledge deposits from the memory banks created in lectures be avoided at all costs. Instead, Freire recommends that students digest the information in the course and relate it to their own personal circumstances in ways that transcend mindless recitation for exams and the cut and paste method of writing research papers.

My use of the parceled classroom and writing across the curriculum are reflected in the fact that my syllabus for the course has fewer lectures than most college courses. Instead, I deliver start up lectures on “Course Questions.” These are topics that scholars who are conversant about Vietnam and the war would be expected to know something about. Then, teams of students return to class with presentations of further research on these topics. They stand for questions by myself and their colleagues, revise their presentations and save them to disc. At the end of the semester, all students are presented with a copy of the research on all the topics covered in the course.

When I use the problem posing method, I try to move the students through a series of activities that touch upon three levels of epistemology. First, there is the theoretical level. For this, there are readings like “A Strategic and Economic Perspective” in Robert MacMahon’s Major Problems in the Vietnam War. Next we move to the application of theories like containment, or the domino theory to the strategies and tactics they created. For this, they can read Turley’s essay called “Tactical Defeat, Strategic Victory for Hanoi” in the same book. Then we touch upon the daily reality that was created by tactical decisions of unit commanders. That means the students must come as close as they can to things like search and destroy missions and ambushes in the jungle. For this stage of the work, I try, as Friere instructs, to get the students to make the materials as meaningful on a personal level as possible. This is done in a number of ways. Sometimes they read and discuss primary sources like Ronald Glasser’s 365 Days. Glasser was a physician who treated the wounded at Camp Zama, Japan. His book is a compilation of vignettes about serving in Vietnam in various roles. Of course, he talks about infantry and tank drivers, but he also paints poignant pictures of the bun ward, the psychiatrists. For me, his most moving vignette is a single page autopsy report on a soldier who stepped on a landmine.

Sometimes I also show my students parts of videos that I have edited for the class after I returned to Vietnam as a guest of the Vietnamese Ministry of Education. Then they discuss these materials and add their estimation of the personal costs of theory, strategy and tactics.

(The remainder of my presentation at the conference was a film presentation from my return to Vietnam and a discussion of the film as an aid in understanding the war in a “then and now” context. For this publication, I have replaced the film with part of a primary source that I wrote for publication about a little known aspect of search and destroy missions called tunnel warfare. Hopefully, this narrative will have the same effect as the film did; to move the audience from pedagogical theory to practice and to give the audience the experience of becoming a young tunnel rat in 1970, and then reliving the experience as a middle aged scholar in 1991.)

THE TUNNELS IN 1969-1970

One of the unique features of the war in Vietnam was the presence of many tunnels that connected underground enemy living quarters, training facilities, supply depots, machine shops and even hospitals. The entrances to these complexes were very difficult to find. More often than not they were discovered by accident or by the rare fortune of actually seeing the enemy enter or leave one. The first time I saw this happen, a small tree rose straight up out of the ground and a man crawled from under it and put it back in the hole. I had a brief conversation with myself about hallucinations and reality, and by the time I was finished, the man had disappeared. A senior NCO in my company told me in no uncertain terms that my slow reaction time and size meant that I had moved to the front of the line of “volunteers” to be a tunnel rat. I knew our company commander wouldn’t allow me to be forced into a tunnel, but the unspoken belief in my own immortality that most young men have, or my stupidity, led me into an occasional foray into the tunnels we discovered in the central highlands of Vietnam and Cambodia.

Specialist fourth class Greg Bodell, the man who taught me the basic rules of survival in the tunnels, told me several things that still remain with me. “If you’re going to go in, do it quick”, he said. “Otherwise, they get far enough ahead of you to set traps or wait around a turn in the tunnel for you to come by head first and defenseless.” Another of ‘Bo’s rules was that tunnels turn every five meters or so to prevent cave-ins. So, it was easy to estimate how far you had gone by counting the turns. Finally, he told me “if you ever see a flashlight coming your way, you can fire away, but more than likely, you’re already a dead man.” Armed with these pearls of optimism, a pistol, several grenades, and a sharp sheath knife I went into a number of tunnels.

Like my first few hours in Vietnam, my memories of the tunnels are another cognitive slide show, but the scenes are more frightening. It amazes me still that I know what the emotion of fear looks like. Sometimes I can still smell it. I can see myself jolted by an adrenaline overload that would energize a mannequin. That is closely followed by the struggle to overcome the initial wave of suffocating panic associated with the blindness and claustrophobic atmosphere when the walls of a tunnel pressed in both shoulders at once. As the pictures move from the intangible to the tangible, they slow to a litany of vivid freeze frames that capture the more real, and therefore more frightening, tactile aspects of an intensely personal kind of warfare conducted in total darkness. There was the thump-scrape vibration in the tunnel floor caused by the man, or woman ahead of me, the smell of food cooked on a unique smokeless stove, and occasionally, the incongruously antiseptic smell of a hospital thirty or more feet underground. I also remember the heat of thermite and phosphorous grenades used to melt equipment in the tunnels,
and the lung ripping pain of gas in the tunnels. The last frames have always been reminders of the cruelty and suddenness with which death could appear in those dark and cramped labyrinths of twenty-five years ago.”

THE CUCCI TUNNELS, 1991

... we took a bus ride to the market town of Cuchi to see the tunnel and bunker complex that was built there during the war. These are the tunnels that achieved legendary status after the war was over. One of the more famous accounts of them has been The Tunnels of Cuchi, by Thomas Manfold and John Pennycake. This tunnel complex, the extent of which was determined only after the end of the war, includes over 200 kilometers of tunnels and various military facilities under and around the American Air base at Cuchi. The complex had three underground levels providing housing, communication, medical, storage, and manufacturing facilities for hundreds of people. Every ground level access point was surrounded by camouflaged ambush positions and fighting bunkers. Probably the most unique thing about this facility is the maintenance of secrecy that surrounded it. While we were there, I met a number of people who worked on the base, and a woman who had lived with an American who was stationed there for two years. Despite the obvious number of these kinds of contacts between Americans and Vietnamese, no American was sure of exactly what was below the ground in Cuchi until long after Bob Hope had hosted his last Christmas show there. In fact, several of the people I spoke to were proud that they had enjoyed a party directly underneath Hope’s stage during his last performance.

After a short lecture on the tunnels’ history and construction of the complex, I watched my group of middle aged scholars line up behind a guide for a “patrol” down the jungle trails and into the tunnels. Another veteran and I watched them go in clusters of three and four. We trailed behind our colleagues/comrades and smugly noted the number of hidden fighting bunkers and ambush positions they walked by without noticing. It occurred to both of us that if this were the 60’s or early 70’s, most of us would already be dead. The high point of the “patrol” for most of our group was an excursion into the tunnels. After asking several of them to remove themselves from atop the camouflaged entrance, our guide led some of us below. After a quick and heated debate with myself, I decided that I deserved one fear-free trip through one of Uncle Ho’s underground wonderlands.

I broke all the rules! I made sure that I was the last one down and I let them all move very far ahead of me. I was as at ease as my memories and the darkness allowed me to be. Then, somehow, the lessons imprinted long ago slowly and surely took control. I suppose it was that training that helped me overcome some of the momentary panic of crawling along in the bowels of a living flashback. A small corner of my consciousness began to think this was not such a good idea, but part of my unconsciousness returned me to the mantra of my youth. The momentary panic receded as the old rhythms returned: five meters and expect a turn; feel for the trap door that will let them come up behind you and nail you to the tunnel floor with a spike. Ignore the bats and rats; don’t even think about the possibility of a live cobra being turned loose and heading in your direction.

Just as I recalled the lesson of the lights, I was half blinded by a flashlight. I froze like a stray dog in the headlights of an approaching car. Then my heart registered its disapproval of the whole venture by going into overdrive. It must have been the glimpse of the Vietnamese face along with the light. I remember trying desperately to determine I the year was 1970 or 1991, and just before I worked out the answer, a hand that should have held a weapon reached for my shoulder. A voice said “I thought we had lost you. Let me help you to the exit.”

NOTES


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Spelman, Morehouse, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Antiwar Movement

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Most American college students enter the classroom convinced that the Vietnam War deserves condemnation. They have learned of the war’s folly not only from movies and television, but also from older relatives, who have likely told them the war was not merely senseless but shameful. A 1990 poll sponsored by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations revealed that seventy-one percent of the “general public” agreed that the Vietnam War “was more than a mistake; it was fundamentally wrong and immoral.” These sentiments have been passed to the students we now teach. They can seldom say what made the war “wrong and immoral,” beyond the great toll it exacted in human life. Nevertheless, the majority of American students believe that the Vietnam War should never have happened, and nothing like it should happen again.

In my experience, however, the students’ condemnation of the war does not mean they readily relate to the antiwar movement of the 1960s and early 1970s. Like most Americans, today’s students conflate the antiwar movement and the counterculture movement. When they think of war protesters, they imagine draft-dodging, drug-addled flower children hurling feces at police while chanting, “Make love, not war!” Today’s students—themselves no strangers to sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll—tend to regard such folks with derision and imprecation. These excesses of the Yippies’ 1967 attempt to levitate the Pentagon, or their 1968 nomination of a pig for president—tinters among our students, but also because today’s students too readily see the differences between themselves and 1960s radicals—differences of class, of race and of values. (That is especially true if you teach at a public institution or at an HBCU [Historically Black Colleges and Universities].) There was, however, an individual in the antiwar movement who will grab the students’ attention every time: Martin Luther King, Jr. Students of all backgrounds continue to find King a compelling figure. He may not be universally admired, but he is endlessly fascinating. Even more important, for our purposes here, King’s opposition to the Vietnam War—which has largely disappeared from public memory—centered on issues that concern Americans today.

That is why I introduce the antiwar movement by asking students to read King’s famous speech, “Beyond Vietnam.” Delivered in New York’s Riverside Church on April 4, 1967—one year to the day before his assassination—the speech is pyrotechnic. It brims with prophetic anger and righteous passion. It jars our complacency, and it forces us to grapple with the moral urgency of the issues surrounding the War. As Vincent Harding, formerly of the Spelman history department, has put it: “The speech not only requires us to struggle once more with the meaning of King, but it also presses us to wrestle, as he did, with all of the tangled, bloody, and glorious meaning of our nation (and ourselves), its purposes (and our own), its direction (and our own), its hope (and our own).” Like nothing else, King’s speech invites students into the debate over Vietnam. In doing so, it encourages them not only to learn more about Vietnam the war, but also about Vietnam the country.

Before discussing the content of King’s speech, I should mention that King’s close ties to Morehouse and Spelman make “Beyond Vietnam” an especially effective assignment for my students at the Atlanta University Center. On the campuses of Morehouse and Spelman, students liter­ally walk in King’s footsteps. King’s father was a graduate of Morehouse, his mother a graduate of Spelman. King himself entered Morehouse in 1944 at the age of fifteen, taking his bachelor’s degree in 1948. During the 1960s, King both worked and argued with the students of Spelman and Morehouse as they struggled together for civil rights. At the Atlanta sit-ins of 1960, King was arrested alongside Spelman women. As the 1960s wore on, tensions arose between King and the students of Morehouse and Spelman, especially those who belonged to the Atlanta-based Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an organization that eventually embraced black nationalism. But King’s ties to Spelman and Morehouse never broke. His memorial service in April 1968 took place on the Spelman campus in Sisters Chapel, where Spelman women still gather for annual ceremonies such as Founders’ Day.

On the question of Vietnam, students at Morehouse and Spelman actually ranged ahead of King. In 1965 and 1966, as President Lyndon Johnson escalated the war, King said little. Twice he called on LBJ to halt the bombing of North Vietnam and to open negotiations with the National Liberation Front. But in general he was reluctant to criticize
the war. He feared antiwar activism would distract from his campaign for economic justice in Chicago, and he worried about alienating President Johnson, a valuable ally to the civil rights movement. The students of Morehouse and Spelman harbored no such reservations. Those who belonged to SNCC joined with New Left organizations such as the Students for a Democratic Society to participate in the first significant demonstration against the war at the Washington Monument in April 1965. In February 1966, students and faculty at the Atlanta University Center organized an event called Speakout on Vietnam, which encouraged debate over the war. Students also aired their opposition to the war in the student newspapers, the Spelman Spotlight and the Morehouse Tiger. The students' activism did not escape King's notice and may even have spurred him to action. In “Beyond Vietnam,” he spoke proudly of the more than 70 Morehouse students who had chosen the “alternative of conscientious objection,” and he recommended that anyone who opposed the war should follow their lead.

As the antiwar movement burgeoned on the campuses of Morehouse and Spelman, King suffered pangs of conscience that eventually moved him to speak out. His longstanding commitment to nonviolence, along with his acceptance of the Nobel Prize in 1964, made him feel dutybound to speak out. King began to see his silence on Vietnam as a betrayal of himself and of the American people. As he later wrote, “Had I not, again and again, said that the silent onlooker must bear the responsibility for the brutalities committed by the Bull Connors, or by the murderers of the innocent children in a Birmingham church? Had I not committed myself to the principle that looking away from evil is, in effect, a condoning of it?” The crucial turning point for King came in January 1967, when he read an illustrated article called “The Children of Vietnam” in Ramparts magazine. Photographs depicting napalm burns suffered by Vietnamese children staggered King and moved him to act.

King broke his silence the following April in the masterful address, “Beyond Vietnam,” an event sponsored by Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam. The speech was King’s definitive statement on the war, and in it he articulated themes he would revisit throughout the last year of his life. The speech derived its power not only from its language and its passion, but also from its structure. King began with the war’s impact at home, moved to its impact on Vietnam, and ended with its impact on the world. In stages, King moved from a local to a global perspective. He led his audience, in other words, from the familiar to the unfamiliar—which is why the speech remains such a powerful tool in our effort to teach about the war today.

In “Beyond Vietnam,” King outlined five main reasons for opposing the war. I will take them in order, moving from the local to the global, from the familiar to the unfamiliar. First, the war imperiled the anti-poverty programs of the Great Society. By 1967, King believed racial justice was impossible without economic justice. He held out high hopes for President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty. But the war in Vietnam, said King, was an “enemy of the poor,” siphoning money and energy from the Great Society, “like some demonic destructive suction tube.” “It seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor—both black and white—through the poverty program,” he said. “Then came the buildup in Vietnam and I watched the program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything of a society gone mad on war.”

Second, the war devastated not only the hopes but also the lives of the American poor. The government’s policy of granting deferments to students in college or graduate school meant that minorities, the poor and the working classes bore a disproportionate burden in the war. King, along with other Americans, found this appalling. “We were taking the black young men who had been crippled by our society,” he said, “and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem.” King also pointed out the irony of seeing blacks and whites “kill and die together for a nation that has been unable to seat them together in the same schools.” King’s focus was once again on the damage the war inflicted on social justice at home.

Third, and here King began to connect the American and Vietnamese people, King argued that the war promoted violence at home and abroad. King believed there was a direct connection between the violence that shattered Vietnam and the violence that sundered American cities in the last half of the 1960s. He sharply criticized the U.S. government for underwriting this violence. His analysis is worth quoting at length:

As I have walked among the desperate, rejected and angry young men I have told them that Molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems . . . But they asked—and rightly so—what about Vietnam? They asked if our own nation wasn’t using massive doses of violence to solve its problems, to bring about the changes it wanted. Their questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today—my own government.

King added that such violence not only poisoned America’s soul, but also destroyed the “deepest hopes of men the world over.”

Fourth, shifting his focus to Vietnam itself, King asserted the war brutalized and victimized the Vietnamese people. Observing that the Vietnamese “must see Americans as strange liberators,” King castigated the government’s support of the corrupt Diem regime, and he wondered why the Johnson administration pursued a war that undermined rather than supported Vietnamese independence. He made clear that he did not see Ho Chi Minh or the nationalist Liberation Front as “paragons of virtue.” But, said King, the war against Ho Chi Minh and his supporters did much more harm than good. It savaged the Vietnamese peasantry,
wrecking villages and families, corrupting women and children, killing men. "The peasants may well wonder if we plan to build our new Vietnam on such grounds as these?" he said. "Could we blame them for such thoughts? We must speak for them and raise the questions they cannot raise. These too are our brothers." In seeking to "give a voice to the voiceless," as he put it, King was truly radical. He not only accused the Johnson administration of hypocrisy—of pursuing a new brand of colonialism in the name of democracy—but he also asked victims of oppression in America to recognize the interests they shared in common with the Vietnamese people—and against their own government. His seemingly innocuous statement—"These too are our brothers"—called on listeners to reject the demands of nationalism and become a "citizen of the world."

Finally, building on his preceding point, King argued that the Vietnam War put America on the wrong side of the coming world "revolution in values." Here, King was truly prophetic. He saw American involvement in Vietnam as "but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit." He predicted, with startling accuracy, that without "a significant and profound change in American life and policy," Americans would find themselves concerned about other Vietnamsin Guatemala and Peru, Thailand and Cambodia, Mozambique and South Africa. But King held out hope. He believed Americans could still take the lead in a world "revolution of values" if only they supported those who were "revolting against old systems of exploitation and oppression." Americans must, said King, declare "eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism." The war in Vietnam delayed the "revolution of values" by abetting hate and violence, by arousing resentment abroad, by promoting national interests above the interests of all humankind. By withdrawing from Vietnam, King suggested, Americans would lay the foundation of a dazzling new world, one unencumbered by nationalism, one united by justice and love.

King's speech does not win universal acclaim from today's students, just as it failed to draw much praise at all when he delivered it. King drew heavy criticism from editorialists and policymakers, who considered his criticism of the government dangerously radical. He also took heat from his friends in the civil rights movement, who thought the speech undermined the struggle for racial equality. Today, many college students find King's idealism off-putting. They are much too cynical to dream of a world based on justice and love.

Still, King's "Beyond Vietnam" is generally a smash hit among students, and it has proven valuable in the classroom in three ways. First, it draws attention to the surging radicalism of King's later years—a militancy that makes King, to quote Vincent Harding once again, an "inconvenient hero." Nowadays, most Americans, including most students, tend to see King as a moderate. That is especially true on the campuses of HBCUs, where students tend to view King through the lens of the Black Power movement. "Beyond Vietnam" helps students to arrive at a more accurate understanding of the dynamic nature of King's protest thought.

Second, King's speech excites students' curiosity about Vietnam, the war. It raises questions about the war's impact on the Great Society, on the civil rights movement, on the poor and the working classes. It raises questions about the actions and methods of American armed forces in Vietnam. And it raises vital questions about America's motivations, commitments and goals in pursuing the war. In short, it causes students to take the antiwar movement seriously, and it encourages them to stop and think about why so many Americans now regard Vietnam with such shame. They are forced at last to engage the profound issues that underlie the War.

Finally, King's speech excites students' curiosity about Vietnam the country. King wanted his listeners to view the war through the eyes of the Vietnamese people, and I found that my students at Spelman, at least, were willing to accept his invitation. King's speech provoked all sorts of questions about Vietnam: What did South Vietnamese peasants think of Ho Chi Minh? What did they think of Americans? What was the role of the village and the family in peasant life? How do the Vietnamese people remember the war? Many of these questions I could not answer. But it was thrilling to see how many questions the assignment managed to spark.

Ultimately, the curiosity that King's "Beyond Vietnam" aroused in my students at Spelman—curiosity about a man, a war and a country—confirmed its value as an assignment. Exciting students' curiosity must be one of our central tasks as teachers. Curiosity ensures that learning will continue beyond the confines of the classroom. But curiosity also opens up the moral dimensions of history by drawing students out of themselves and forcing them to see the world from another point of view. I will close with a quote that captures my thoughts on this score. It comes from Graham Swift's superb novel, Waterland. Says the main character, an old history teacher:

Children, be curious. Nothing is worse (I know it) than when curiosity stops. Nothing is more repressive than the repression of curiosity. Curiosity begets love. It wins us to the world. It's part of our perverse, madcap love for this impossible planet we inhabit. People die when curiosity goes. People have to find out, people have to know. How can there be any true revolution till we know what we're made of?

NOTES


Harding, *Martin Luther King: The Inconvenient Hero*, 69.


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*Standing Buddha*

Kashmir, ca. 10th century

Brass

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