

Alt Spring Break: Oaxaca

By Paula Straile-Costa

Please keep your eye out for students who might be interested in our international Alternative Spring Break trip to Oaxaca, Mexico. It takes a special kind of student, willing to give up the comforts we enjoy in this country, in order to learn about the effects of globalization on local communities abroad. Last year I went with eleven students who experienced an intensive immersion in the Oaxacan culture. Here are some highlights from their trip. Working with a Mexican NGO called *Enlaces Comunitarios/Community Links*, we were able to live and work in San Luis Tilantongo, a rural Mixteca indigenous community, building rain water cisterns for the extremely arid region.

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The previous year's group planted seeds for 3,000 trees and built greenhouses for the seedlings. We visited an artisan collective called Ecoalebrijes, whose name comes from their ecologically conscious production ofalebrijes, the fantastic wood carvings painted in incredible detail that are traditional to Oaxaca and very sought internationally. The artists of the collective harvest the sacred copal wood needed for thealebrijes in a sustainable manner due to its depletion in the region. We visited a carpet weaver and learned about every aspect of techniques that have been in his family for over 100

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This issue of *AIS Occurrences* was produced and edited by Prof. Lisa Cassidy and Prof. Jeremy M. Teigen.

AIS Faculty Updates

Faculty Research and Pedagogy Events

Patricia Ard will be giving two conference presentations this fall. The first is at the International Conference on the Book, in October at Emerson College. This presentation concerns the material culture of literature and famous authors. It is titled "Literary Things: Marketing Authors in Objects." The second presentation is in Philadelphia at the Society for the Study of American Women Writers. It is titled "Mary Peabody Mann and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento: Correspondence between the Americas."

Walt Brown, a widely published author on John F. Kennedy, spoke to the History Club on November 2. Brown demonstrates a couple of examples of the process of investigating JFK's murder, but is more hopeful of fielding numerous questions from the audience. Brown's next JFK project, a CD-ROM database that will be approximately 5,000 pages in length, is scheduled to be released in January, 2008.

Lisa Cassidy has been appointed the treasurer of the eastern branch of the Society for Women in Philosophy (E-SWIP). In addition to creating their website and managing memberships, Lisa will also serve on the program committees for all organizational activities, including the committee that annually chooses the recipient of the Distinguished Woman in Philosophy award. Cassidy, with **Bernard Roy**, also coordinated the New Jersey Regional Philosophical Association's fall 2006 meeting, which was held on campus on November 4.

In summer 2006, **Rosetta D'Angelo** conducted research (in archives in Italy and interviewed partisans), with co-author for the forthcoming book: *Resisting Bodies: Italian Partisan Women during World War II*. In September, she was invited to read her poetry at Hofstra University. In October, she traveled to University of Buenos Aires for the "Congreso Internacional de literatura: Arte e Cultura en la Globalizacion" Conference; her paper was entitled "New Narrative Styles, National Identity, and Marvelous Realism in the Poetic Tales of Contemporary Haitian Women's Writers." She also delivered Italian Women in Trans National activism at the University of Arizona at Tucson, in addition to lecturing at the Upper Saddle River Library.

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years. He uses all natural products down to the soap used to wash the raw wool made from berries and vibrantly colored dyes made of plants and even a small cactus beetle worth 100 dollars a kilo. We learned about the way many indigenous sociopolitical systems are practiced in Oaxaca, for instance, the practice of tequio or lifelong community service and guelaguetza, the practice of sharing one's wealth, whatever that may mean. Our host shared with us many of the traditional beliefs about healing and methods practiced in the community. We witnessed the incredible efforts in reforestation of an NGO called SEDICAM that planted 17,000 trees last year and over 2 million since its initiation in the 1980s. The really impressive part of this work is that it has been done through grassroots organizing of communities that have been so depleted through migration to urban centers and abroad due to the way global economics has hindered the tenant farmers' ability to sustain themselves. Finally, we climbed to the ancient site of Monte Alban (below).



2007 Trip to Puebla, Mexico: Oaxaca has been featured in the international news since last May when a revolution was sparked just weeks after last year's trip. Teacher unions gathered in Oaxaca to make their yearly petitions to the state for improved working conditions and support for Mexican education. Amnesty International has visited and recorded numerous human rights violations. At least a hundred and fifty people have been detained without access to family or legal counsel and some even tortured. At least 13 people have been killed over the course of the protests. The protest has apparently ended, but the violence and repression continue. Finally, the program we worked with, *Enlaces Comunitarios/Community Links*, had to shut down operations. Thus, this spring, we plan to work with them in the state of Puebla. Iraidá López will pilot a similar service trip to Cajolá, Guatemala this May as well.

AIS Clubs & Organizations

Students and Faculty Events

The **AIS Colloquium Committee**, consisting of **Yvette Kisor**, **Lisa Cassidy**, and **James Hoch** had two presentations this fall: The first featured talk was political science professor **Jeremy M. Teigen** speaking on "Swift Boats and Swing Votes: Military Service and American Electoral Politics" on October __. The Political Forum co-hosted this event. Sigma Tau Delta (literature honor society) co-hosted the second colloquium event, a lecture by literature professor **Monika Giacoppe**. She spoke about her recently published book, a translation of Stephanie Corinna Bille's stories, as well as about the process of translation. This event was on December 6. *The AIS Colloquium Series is partially funded by a grant from the Ramapo College Foundation.*

Fall 2006 Culture Club activities:

- ▶ Multicultural Festival by the Arch, with US popular songs and Puerto Rican dance, on Sept. 25.
- ▶ **Marguerite Dunne** (AIS) gave a talk entitled "The Medicinal Value of Herbs" on Oct. 16.
- ▶ **Regina Clark** (SSHS) gave a talk entitled "Modern Segregation: Should We Overcome?" on Nov. 13.
- ▶ End of Semester Party on December 4, with a cultural exhibit from Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Cuba, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Iraq, Italy, South Korea, Morocco, Panama, Russia, Spain, United States, and Vietnam.

The **Italian Club** hosted a Poetry Reading by the Italian-American Poet: Daniela Gioseffi, an American Book Award Winning author of twelve books of poetry and prose.

Political Forum held an election coverage watching party at J Lee's on election night. Additionally, the club organized a debate between the **College Democrats** and **College Republicans** for the week after the election.

A warm welcome is extended to the new international scholars currently at Ramapo. **Laura Barbin**, **Chafik Chakir**, **Verónica Muñoz**, and **Abel Pérez Abad**, all four Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants in French, Arabic, and Spanish, come to us from France, Morocco, Argentina, and Spain respectively. We also welcome Tatiana Ivouchkina, of Volgograd State Pedagogical University, and Ning Qiao (aka James), of the Utah Institute of Science and Technology, Shanghai Normal University, who will teach Russian and Chinese language and culture. We are lucky to have them on campus. They are helping us to implement the international/intercultural mission of the College.

Philo Meeting at Ramapo:

The philosophy club hosted philosophy professors, as well as students and community members to campus for the November 4 meeting of the New Jersey Regional Philosophical Society's (NJRPA) fall meeting. Dean Jennefer Mazza welcomed NJRPA participants at the morning reception. Then several sessions of philosophy papers followed, featuring professors from as far as the University of Chicago, Oxford, and Vanderbilt University. Diana Meyers (University of Connecticut) was the invited plenary speaker in the afternoon. Her talk, "Agency and Embodiment", discussed body comportment, identity crises, and the psycho-corporeality of agency. After more afternoon philosophy papers, the group celebrated the day with a wine and cheese reception. This is the first time Ramapo has hosted the NJRPA, and philosophy professors Lisa Cassidy, Bernard Roy, and philosophy students will look forward to hosting it again next year.

From One Arch to Another: NYU's Faculty Resource Center

By Sharon Rubin

This summer, I participated in the NYU Faculty Resource Network seminar on "New York, American Literature, and the Cosmopolitan Ideal." (Four other Ramapo faculty members participated in other seminars). My seminar was taught by two young, energetic, and very smart assistant professors, and included 21 other faculty members from around the country and Puerto Rico. The amount of reading was grueling, but I was excited to have a graduate school experience after so many years away from graduate school. (Could it really be 34?) Both used the internet and NYU's equivalent of WebCT as if they were born with a mouse in their hands. The seminar was so materials-rich that I was almost overwhelmed, but it gave me the courage to work on developing a course on New York suitable for undergraduates at Ramapo. Faculty do not pay anything to attend--breakfast and lunch are included, and there is a dorm room for anyone from over 50 miles away. Books and materials are also provided. Wearing my hat as liaison with the NYU Faculty Resource Network, I urge faculty to apply for the seminars or for other programs that are part of the Network. Whether you need access to the library, a mentor, an opportunity to take classes at NYU, or the intellectual stimulation of a summer or winter seminar, please apply.

Marguerite Dunne just published article in *Chronogram*, entitled "Abraham Cherrix and the Hoxsey Formula Nonpharmaceutical Cancer Treatment in the Pharmaceutical Era." In her other life outside of Ramapo, Dunne is a clinical herbalist and presented her work to the Culture Club on the traditional use of herbal medicine.

Chuck Carreras is on sabbatical this semester. His project is working with the Mahwah Museum. There is a very special exhibit going on until December 16 centered around George Washington's passing through Mahwah on August 26, 1781. They have on exhibit a large part of a collection on loan, which include pewter plates given by Washington to Mahwah resident Andrew Hopper.



There are many other items of interest from this very valuable collection. The museum is open Saturdays and Sundays from 1-5 and is located on Franklin Turnpike in Mahwah. If anyone would like to arrange a special opening for a class please call Chuck at 201-825-3840 or email at ccarrera@ramapo.edu. The main focus of his work is organizing the archive. The hope is to arrange to have Ramapo students intern at the Mahwah in the future. Last Spring semester there were two Ramapo students who worked at the museum, and this semester there is one.

Dana Crum, adjunct professor at Ramapo since spring 2006, has recent publications in both creative writing and scholarship. Among the highlights are: "Nothing Can Remain Unchanged" (a novel excerpt), published in *Bronx Biannual: Urbane Urban Literature* (a literary journal) in July, 2006. In addition, Crum's round-up review of nonfiction books on how American writers have portrayed African-Americans will appear in the Jan/Feb 2007 issue of *Black Issues Book Review*. She has several other publications upcoming in *Black Issues Book Review*. In addition, "From Dinosaurs to Hip-Hop: How I Learned to Write a Research Paper" (an article) appeared in the Feb/Mar 2006 issue of *Writing*, a Weekly Reader publication.

Paul Elovitz has edited *Applying Psychology to Current Events, History, and Current Event* (September, 2006), i-x, 236 pages. In addition he has a number of articles in four journals. Among them are: "Separate Psychobiographical Tents, Separate Struggles," *Journal of*

Psychohistory 34 No. 1 Summer, 2006 pp. 83-93 (an invited article); "Exploring the Dreams of Historical Figures: Humphry Davy, Alexander the Great, and Xenophon," *Mentalities* Vol. 20 No. 1; "Donald Carveth: Psychoanalytic Sociologist," *Clio's Psyche* 13, no. 1 (June 2006): 66-74; and "Art and Science in Psychohistory," *Clio's Psyche* 13, no. 1 (June 2006): 11-13. His forthcoming publications include (among others): "A Conversation on Europe's Suicidal Embrace With Hitler" (with David Beisel), *Journal of Psychohistory*. Vol. 34, No. 3 Winter 2006). Elovitz also has made five presentations this year to three different scholarly groups, including: "Psychological Insights on the Enemies and the Defenders of the Open Society," at the Psychohistory Forum in Manhattan on May 6, 2006, as well as "Reflections on Suicidal Terrorism and the Search for the Biography of bin Laden," on November 4, 2006 at the Psychohistory Forum in Manhattan. The other panel presenters are speaking on "A Psychoanalytic Approach to Osama bin Laden" and "Collective Suicide in Germany in 1945." Elovitz also continues on as the editor of "*Clio's Psyche: Understanding the 'Why' of Culture, Current Events, History, and Society.*"

Niza Fabre presented "Lo popular en la literatura: mitos y supersticiones en Huasipungo (1934) de Jorge Icaza y en Juyungo (1943) y LaEntundada (1971) de Adalberto Ortiz" at the Association of Ecuatorianists in North America in Guayaquil, Ecuador, July 18-22. The translation of the title is: "Popular Culture in Literature: Myth and Superstition in Huasipungo of Jorge Icaza and in Juyungo and The Entundada of Adalberto Ortiz." On November 7, she also made a presentation on "Misconceptions of Voodoo," sponsored by the Haitian Organization for Progress. Her translation from Spanish into English of the book *Blacks in Central Central America*, which was written in Spanish by Santiago Valencia Chala was published in July 2006 by Mellen Press. The book is dedicated to Angelo Tarallo, who assisted in reading and revising her English translation. Virginia Gonsalves-Dumond (SSHS) wrote a scholarly preface and Karl Johnson (SSHS) and Samuel Pinn (SSHS) provided support and revision of the manuscript. She also gave a talk on "Culture and its Definition" for the Culture Mix Week at Ramapo on November 20.

Monika Giacoppe's forthcoming book, *The Transparent Girl and Other Stories*, co-translated and edited with Christine Makward, will be published by Lexington Books this spring.

Sharon Goldman, along with **Jeremy Teigen**, served as panel discussants at the Northeastern Political Science Association Conference in Boston on November 9-11.

Ting Gong will publish "New Trends in China's Corruption: Change Amidst Continuity" in Lowell Dittmer and Guoli Liu, eds., *China's Deep Reform: Domestic Politics in Transition* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006). In addition, "Corruption and Local Governance: The Double Identity of Chinese Local Governments in Market Reform," will appear in *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (2006): 85-102.

Susan Hangen presented a conference paper on my ongoing research on the Nepali diaspora at the 35th Annual Conference on South Asia at Madison, WI, Oct. 20-22. The paper was called "Global Gurungs" DVDs, Photographs and the Production of Intimacy." She organized the panel, called "Connecting with the Nepali Diaspora: Media, Politics, and Affect."

James Hoch won a National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist Grant in Poetry for \$20,000. This year a panel of judges selected 50 recipients from a pool of 1100 qualified applicants. The grant was awarded based upon a selection of poems. Poems have been accepted in the following journals: *Forklift Ohio*, *32 Poems*, and *Poetry Northwest*. His new book, *Miscreants*, is due out in June from WW Norton.

Robert Janusko (adjunct, English) is a discussant in the internet "Ulysses for Experts" group. Membership in the group is by invitation and is limited to 20 participants. Among others in the group are the editors of the Critical and Synoptic edition of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and of the James Joyce Archive, and the directors of the Dublin, Zurich and Antwerp Joyce centers.

Yvette Kisor's piece on Beowulf, "Numerical Composition, Howlett, and Beowulf: A Consideration," has been accepted for publication in the premier journal *Anglo-Saxon England*. In addition, her article, "Elves (and Hobbits) always refer to the Sun as She': Some Notes on a Note in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*" will appear in *Tolkien Studies* 4 (2007).

Iraida H. López has presented at five different venues since February, including the Latin American Studies Association Congress in San Juan, PR, and a National Endowment for the Humanities Seminar at SUNY Buffalo, where she was a participant. Her article "La elaboración del espacio en la última narrativa autobiográfica cubano-americana" was published in *Temas: Cultura, ideología, sociedad* 44 (Fall 2005). Her review of *Among Worlds/Entre Mundos*, a volume of essays on Gloria Anzaldúa, is forthcoming in *MELUS*, and a second one of Eliana Rivero's *Discursos desde la diáspora* appeared in *Letras femeninas*. Her entries on Chilean folklorist Violeta Parra and Cuban novelist Ena Lucía Portela are forthcoming in the Routledge *Encyclopedia of*

Latin American Women Writers. Iraida has been invited to evaluate candidates for Fulbright-Hays scholarships at the end of the fall semester.

Sandra Martin's article "Hispanic Culture through Art: El español a través de las artes visuales" appears in the current September issue of *Hispania* published by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. It asserts Hispanic art can be used to teach language and culture to all levels of Spanish students from elementary school through college. After a week in Maine, she took a course at Middlebury Alumni College at Breadloaf in Vermont entitled, "La literatura y el arte en la España del Siglo de Oro." ("Spain's Golden Age of Art and Literature") over the summer.

Carter Meyer published an article, "The Battle between Art and Progress": Edgar Hewett and the Politics of Region in the Early Twentieth Century Southwest," appearing in the fall 2006 issue of *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*. She also has a published book review of Jorold S. Auerbach's *Explorers in Eden: Pueblo Indians and the Promised Land* (University of New Mexico Press, 2006) appearing in the forthcoming issue of *Journal of American History*. Meyer was also part of a panel presentation with **Judith Jeney**, **Jennefer Mazza**, and **Tom Heed** at the American Studies Association conference in Oakland, CA on October 14. The panel focused on Ramapo's recent U.S. State Department grant to develop an American Studies Center at Volgograd State Pedagogical University in Russia. The title of her paper was "Assessing Diversity: A Transnational Exchange." Meyer has also been invited to serve on a panel of consultants for a major new exhibit on Native Americans in American Popular Culture being organized by the Oakland Museum of California.



Monica Pelaez's article on Emily Dickinson's critical dialogue with sentimentalism entitled "Reversing the Irreversible: Dickinson and the Sentimental Culture of Death" will be included in the forthcoming volume *Essays on Culture and Irreversibility*, to be published by Cambridge Scholars Press in spring 2007. The essay considers Dickinson's resistance to the sentimentalism that not only dominated American popular literature by the mid-nineteenth century but also contributed significantly to her development as a poet.

Steve Rice is being supported by a grant from the Ramapo College Foundation to support a proposal for a book project; it will be annotated and illustrated edition of a memoir written by an important nineteenth-century

American wood engraver and painter named Elbridge Kingsley. The grant enables Rice to hire an American Studies student, Daniel London, to help with the transcription of a sample chapter of the memoir, and with researching and writing the annotations. Rice also delivered the keynote address at the "Blackstone Canal Symposium" in November at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. The symposium focused on the history of the Blackstone Canal, which was completed in 1828 and which helped turn Worcester into an important manufacturing center. His talk was entitled titled "Heads and Hands: Imagining the Industrial Order in Antebellum America."

Ed Shannon presented an essay, "Daydreams and
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Student News:

Literature major **Donna Kauder** has been awarded the Garvin Lally Scholarship.

Erin Masterson recently celebrated the birth of a daughter in Georgia (pictured below). She lives on an Army base there with her husband who may soon be deployed to Iraq.



Nick Jackson, philosophy club co-founder and philosophy minor, is deciding between graduate programs for a Master's of Library Science. Though he may attend Indiana University, he is very interested in Pratt's program in museumship, as well.

Michael T. Clark, philosophy minor, is taking advantage of all Ramapo has to offer. On campus he starred in the fall 2006 production of *True West*. Off campus he is doing an internship at the Harriet Jacobs papers, housed at New York University.

Rosetta D'Angelo is pleased to announce that two students (minoring in Italian), were selected to attend the NIAF (National Italian American Foundation in Washington DC), for the 31st Anniversary Convention and Gala, October 20-22. Judge Samuel Alito Jr. will be honored this year. The students, **Christina Bandino** and **Cherise Gordon** will be part of the events and celebration. With D'Angelo's help, the students received some funds from the Italian American Educators and the Italian American Foundation.

Marketing: Winsor McCay, Robert Crumb, and the Graphic Novel” at the Midwest Modern Language Association conference in November.

Paul Straile-Costa’s recent article, “Redeeming Acts: Religious Performance and Indigenismo in Cherríe Moraga’s Feminist Revision of Chicano Activist Theater,” has been published in the refereed online journal called *American@* Vol. III, Issue 1 “The Anticapitalist Struggle of Native Peoples in America,” Fall 2005.

<<http://www.uhu.es/hum676/revista/index.htm>>

This summer she also presented a paper entitled, “Remembering the goddess in Ritual: Cherríe Moraga’s Chicana Lesbian Translation of the Medea,” at the international conference entitled, “Medea Mutations and Permutations of a Myth,” held in Bristol, UK organized by the universities of Bristol and Nottingham, July 17-19.

Jeremy M. Teigen was featured on a spot during National Public Radio’s election night coverage for the 2006 congressional midterm elections. He was interviewed by Don Gonyea and Andrea Seabrook.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Paul Elowitz traveled to Barcelona to give a paper this July and then spent four days in July doing historical travel and research in and around Arles in France. (Thanks to the college for the \$200 it contributed to this activity, which paid most of my registration fees.) His wife Geri is recovering nicely from her serious intestinal surgery to correct her diverticulosis.

Ron Hayashida’s daughter is attending Lafayette College in Easton, PA, where she is enjoying a freshman seminar on “Death and Dying” (the crematorium was great) and where is also playing Club Soccer. She says that Ramapo’s cafeteria, especially its salad, is much superior to that of Lafayette’s. Her main complaint is that she has to do her own laundry.

This past summer **Bernard Roy** continued the custom of moderating philosophical discussions in a nursing home in the south of France. Bernard barter this service for the use of the nursing home library for his research. This year, there was a new resident/participant; he is a retired general from the Gendarmerie Nationale and had just celebrated his 100th birthday. The others, in their low nineties, were youngsters. The topics of discussion, proposed by the participants, were: “La Mode” (Fashion) and “Activite d’aujourd’hui-- Activite d’autrefois” (Things we do today and things we did in the old days). Bernard also

moderated a cafe philo in Ibiza, Spain. The participants were non-Spanish residents of the island; they came mostly from England. The topic they chose was: “How can the Christian West make some accommodation with Islam.” Since his return from Europe he has resumed the bi-weekly moderation of cafes philo in Manhattan. On October 26th, 2006 the Manhattan group will discuss the purpose of values. The same topic will be discussed in Atlanta, D.C., Paris, and Ibiza. The summaries of the discussions will be posted on the web. Anyone interested in reading the results should contact broy@ramapo.edu.

In August, **Lisa Cassidy** married her fiancé Mark Meiler. Anthony Padovano officiated the New Canaan, Connecticut ceremony. The weather was perfect, the groom’s father was the best man, the bride’s mother was the maid of honor, and the eight of the couple’s nieces and nephews comprised the rest of the wedding party. Afterwards the couple honeymooned in Brazil. (Thanks Paula Straile-Costa for vacation advice!).



Katina Manko and Gary have welcomed Sylvia Pearl and Madelaine Juliet (pictured above) to the family. They came very suddenly at 11:27 and 11:28 on Saturday night October 28, weighing in at 2 pounds 15 ounces and 2 pounds 13 ounces. The twins are very tiny, they each gave a little wail when they delivered and are very kicky and feisty. The amazing NICU nurses at Albany Medical Center are very positive and comforting; neither baby is on oxygen and each needs just a little assistance breathing. They have a long way to go, of course, and will stay in the NICU for another 8-10 weeks (maybe a bit less). Once Tina is released from the hospital she will move over to the Ronald MacDonald House just across the street so she can stay near the babies, as she cannot drive for a few weeks. She gives her heartfelt thanks to everyone for all the support and encouragement.

During the summer **Jeremy Teigen** tagged along with his wife, Julie George, on her field work researching ethnofederalism in post-Soviet space, heading to various cities in the Caucasus, including Tbilisi and Batumi.