



P R I S M

The Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts

Lemos asks "Is the West Winning the War on Terrorism?"

By TRAYAN TRAYANOV '05

CISLA students are acutely aware of how perceptions of politically significant facts can vary from country to country and from culture to culture. The CISLA program has always encouraged a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approach to issues of academic interest. It is then not surprising to have a speaker with the experience and vision of an international reporter invited as a CISLA keynote speaker for this year's Parents Weekend.

Portuguese journalist José Alberto Lemos is a renowned political reporter, whose coverage includes the Reagan-Gorbachev Summit (1987), the American presidential elections (1988) and the first democratic election in the USSR (1989). In 1988 he joined the newly founded national newspaper "Publico" and in 1996 became the vice-director of the Porto editorial office. He has also worked as a news editor for Portugal's first private national TV network, SIC. He came to Connecticut College as a fellow of the German Marshall Fund under the auspices of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation.

On October 5th, Lemos delivered a public lecture titled "Is the West Winning the War on Terrorism?," which outlined five steps necessary for victory. He began his talk with a reminder that, in the years and months preceding September 11th, experts frequently pointed out the threat of terrorist aggression. The warnings, however, were dismissed as "fiction" or paranoid overreaction by the public at large and especially by those responsible for security policies. This was, according to Lemos, "unforgivable negligence," and when September 11th came, "reality overtook fiction."

Many have tried to draw parallels between the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Japanese offensive of 1941, but Lemos regards such interpretations to be off the point. "Pearl Harbor occurred when the world was at war and most people had the perception that sooner or later Americans would be pulled into the conflict." Moreover, while kamikaze fighters were "just a detail" to the atrocities of the world war, fanatic suicide bombers are the core menace in today's conflict, he said. The first step to defeating terrorism is to realize that the enemy is ready to die and is hell-bent on striking "again and again."

In trying to protect American citizens, Lemos continued, the Bush administration has undertaken controversial measures that jeopardize civil liberties and individual rights. This is exactly what the terrorists aim to achieve, he warned. A second key step to emerging victorious is the awareness that "beyond military action and intelligence measures to stop terror, our open and free way of life must prevail."

A third important step that the war on terrorism demands from us is overcoming stereotypes and generalizations and penetrating the underlying causes of the problem. "Those who attack are not representatives of a civilization, not even a culture," the speaker argued. "Those who attack are fanatics, but all religions have their fanatics." We need to go beyond the perception of a "clash of civilizations," for it does more good than harm to Bin Laden's cause, he said.

Hatred of America is "much more an Arab phenomenon than a Muslim one," Lemos



José Alberto Lemos, Portuguese journalist for Público, speaking at Oliva Hall

emphasized, pointing out that the four most populated Muslim countries – Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Turkey – "have nothing to do with these attacks" and "have achieved a relatively successful combination of Islam and modernity." The Arab states, however, "imported cars, whiskey, jewels, and fashionable clothes [from the West], but they never imported political parties, or free markets, or rule of law, or accountability, or human rights."

"Politically, these Arab regimes are the most repressive that we find in the world today." They have deepened the gap between leaders and the masses, sentencing millions to absolute poverty despite massive oil revenues.

To avert discontent, they cut links with the outside world and pursued savage policies of political and cultural suppression.

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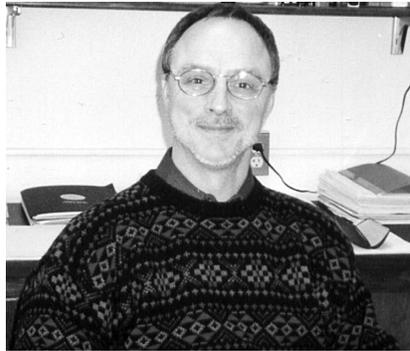
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From the Director

As you all might know, CISLA is not alone on the Connecticut College campus anymore. Over the last five years or so, three other Centers have begun to offer certificate programs modeled on CISLA's: The Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy, The Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology (CAT) and the Goodwin-Niering Center for Conservation Biology and Environmental Studies (CCBES). Over the last year, the directors of the four academic centers have begun meeting regularly to discuss common concerns and share ideas. The initial impetus for the meetings was the decision, at my urging, to present a joint session on "Interdisciplinary Centers and Undergraduate Research" at the 9th annual Conference of the Council on Undergraduate Research, which met here June 20-22, 2002. The joint session went very well. All of the centers have followed the CISLA model in promoting interdisciplinary approaches to undergraduate study. They have also followed us in pushing their students to plan a good part of their undergraduate education around a senior project that integrates the practical experience gained through an internship with the theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom. There are differences of emphasis, of course, but when presented as a group the ways in which the different centers promote undergraduate research made a powerful impression on the audience. They truly do distinguish the kind of education we foster here at Connecticut College.

On the basis of that successful cooperation, Dean of the Faculty Helen Regan offered us the opportunity this year to apply for funds, made available by President Fainstein and the Mellon Foundation, to create a series of events for the Common Hour, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. on Fridays, when no classes are held. We chose to focus the series on "Interdisciplinary and Integrative Learning in the Liberal Arts," which is how we have come to see the work we do. We also conceived of the series as an opportunity to introduce our students to one another and the whole campus to the kind of work that the centers are doing. To that end, we plan to have two Common Hour events this spring. The first will kick off the series by getting all the center seniors together for dinner and an open discussion on integrative and interdisciplinary learning. The second will feature a graduating



senior from each of the four centers in a public Common Hour presentation of their projects. We will continue next year with a series of four Common Hours, each with a theme that crosses over at least two of the centers. For example, a CISLA student, Maria Placht '03, doing a senior integrative project on her work with The Nature Conservancy in Yunnan, China (see page 6) might team up with someone from CCBES working on similar issues in the U.S. Or one of our students working on childhood education in Argentina might team up with someone in the PICA program focusing on similar issues in New London. Or like CISLA scholar Tim Podkul '03 who developed a portfolio of designs in weavings from the Chilean women he worked with might present along with a CAT student developing new ways of presenting images over the Internet. In any case, we plan to turn the process and the presentations over to the students themselves.

The idea to turn things over to the students originated in IS401 this fall. As I have become more involved in the designing and teaching of this course, I have come to realize that what the seniors want most is to share what they have learned with each other. I have turned the class over to them, letting the groups formed for the Fall Banquet each create a portion of the seminar, with readings and class exercises. More than ever before the "New Perspectives on Modern Global Society" came from the CISLA Scholars themselves.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frederick S. Paxton".

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In the wake of September 11 we are frequently asked about changing trends in study abroad and work abroad. It is almost always parents who ask the questions, certainly inspired by concerns of sending their children away in these times of terrorism, talk of war and anti-American sentiment. The answer they get is not the one they expect. Students more than ever are choosing to study and work abroad. According to the "Open Doors Survey" conducted by the Institute of International Education, study abroad is up by 7.4% for 00/01 (following double digit increases in the previous 4 years). It is also interesting to note, according to the same survey, that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of students going to less traditional destinations.

The reasons for these trends are numerous. Many college students of today have already had an international experience, be it a family vacation, a high school language class trip or a volunteer experience. They have gotten a stimulating taste of another culture and want to continue to have these kinds of experiences. International travel has become almost commonplace and often can be less expensive than domestic travel and as easily arranged and accessible. The parents of the students who come to Connecticut College already know that their children will enter a work and social world that will have an international component, thus they encourage them to be prepared by making curricular choices and study abroad plans. There is also a feeling among international educators that the young people who are making these decisions do so in part because they realize the crucial leadership role that they can and should have in helping to find solutions to the world problems of today. Poverty, the environment, human rights, health care, literacy, racism, gender and economic inequality are common to all nations. All the clichés apply to returning students: they are wiser, more mature, curious and anxious to find a role for themselves in our truly interconnected world.

The CISLA application process begins in September, and we had an embarrassment of riches as 100 students made an initial application to the program. This was by far the largest number ever, and it represents about 20% of the sophomore class. By the time we actually received all the final proposals we had 51 applicants (this is normal attrition). Once again the statistics were compelling: the average GPA of these sophomores was 3.52, a very impressive number after only freshman year. The CISLA committee assembles for a daylong meeting to evaluate all the applicants based on a series of criteria and to admit the new class. It was a highly competitive pool, and our difficult decisions were made after long hours of discussion. The new class is comprised of 31 students. While we do not have an official cap on the number of students, we have realized that the ideal class size is between 30 and 35.

We need to think creatively now. Given the unprecedented high interest in CISLA, we have begun to ask ourselves new questions. Obviously the kind of program, challenge and opportunity that CISLA offers is unique. The new generation of students who come to Connecticut College do not need to be persuaded that this is a good thing. Should the college be looking at these statistics from an institutional point of view? For years, Connecticut College struggled to find its niche among peer institutions. It seems we have found it, and now we must implement ways to see that the opportunities are available to more students. The CISLA staff has begun a discussion of how we might be able to meet the needs of the many students who want to have an international work experience. This could feasibly happen through coordination with the CELS (Career Enhancing Life Skills) office and its funded internship component. Perhaps we could envision other ways to associate students with the center. We also are working closely with the development office to look for ways that would permit us to fund more opportunities.

THE CISLA INTERNATIONAL COOKBOOK - COMING SOON!!!

Inspired by their travels around the world, the CISLA Student Advisory Board has created the first-ever CISLA International Cookbook. Order forms will be sent to all CISLA alumni, friends & family. To pre-order your copy, e-mail Amber Ayer at aayer@conncoll.edu - Get Ready to Cook!!!!

Congratulations CISLA Class of 2005

A very warm welcome is extended to the **CISLA Class of 2005**. Our newest members are Malik Asif, Amanda Calkins, Jordan Chase-Jacobsen, Julie Chyten-Brennan, Heather DeDecko, Christine Duncan, Kaili Goslant, Liana Guzman, Lauren Harris, Laura Heaton, Laila Hochhausen, Lauren Horowitz, Sam Howe, Elizabeth Knorr, Linas Krisciunas, Norah Longendyck, Elizabeth Marolda, Jillian May, Kate McDowell, Abigail Nintzel, Andrea Reynolds, Ellen Richardson, Aim Sinpeng, Meredith Stebbins,

Stephanie Tatro, Trayan Trayanov, Sujata Tuladhar, Anna Watson, Zach West, and Alexa Xanthopolous.

There will be a special ceremonial banquet and panel discussion held in their honor on Saturday, February 22, 2003 for students and their parents.

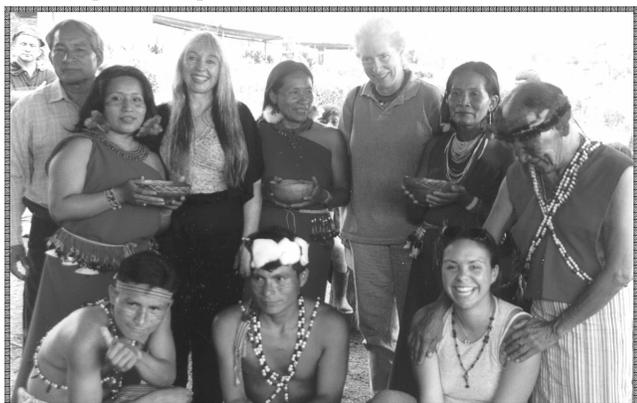
Our family’s love affair with CISLA began, as affairs often do, almost by accident. We initially heard about this intriguing program in which undergraduates flew around the world doing strange and wonderful things at the meeting for newly accepted students. In fact, we heard enough about the program to make it an important factor in our daughter Alexandra’s decision to choose Conn over the other schools to which she’d been accepted.

The first important step in Alex’s CISLA journey was writing the proposal that would determine her acceptance to the program. For weeks (it seemed like years) she agonized over what she would do in the program and what she would try to accomplish. She learned the importance of focus and setting ambitious, but achievable, goals. What emerged was a proposal to focus on the impact of globalization on women in Latin America. You have to understand that a CISLA proposal is like nothing undergrads or women have had to complete at that point in their college career. When Alex learned of her acceptance in CISLA she was as thrilled as we had ever seen her.

The spring semester of junior year was frantic as usual. This time it was about finding the “perfect” CISLA internship for the summer. After Alex, the program staff and we decided that going to Buenos Aires as an intern for the World Bank during the Argentinian crisis might not be the best idea, Alex found a job working for Banco Solidario in Quito, Ecuador. Solidario is the largest microfinance lender in Ecuador. It makes small loans of \$100 or more to individuals who want to start or expand a small business and who have no other access to capital.

The first days were a little bumpy. Finding a place to live proved difficult until the owner of a local bed and breakfast decided Alex could have a room at a reduced rate if she would help translate for the tourists who spoke no Spanish. Quito also proved to be quite different from the cosmopolitan, essentially middle-class culture of Santiago.

Alex’s first day on the job wasn’t exactly typical. Ecuador was playing in the World Cup for the first time in its history. The bank, along with every other institution in Ecuador was closed so the staff could watch the game and party. Nice work.



Alex (1st row, far right) and her mother Anita Fiorillo (2nd row, 5th person from the left) enjoy their welcome reception from the Shuar in Macas, Ecuador



A Shuar tribesman plays his fiddle for Alex’s arrival

The next day I got a frantic call from Alex. “Dad, I need your help.” It turned out that her boss, the Director of Microlending for the bank, had taken her along to inspect a branch outside of Quito that wasn’t doing well. After dressing down the assembled staff, she informed them that she was asking Señorita Fiorillo, “an economist from the United States,” to investigate why the branch wasn’t doing well. Alex apparently handled that situation well and went on to become a trusted member of the bank’s staff. But that’s only part of the story.

Once again, the parents sought to capitalize on the daughter’s travels. We booked a flight to Quito for early August and made plans for the three of us to go to the Galapagos. “We need to make a slight detour in our plans,” Alex e-mailed one evening. The “detour” involved a flight into the Amazon to meet with the leaders of an indigenous tribe called the Shuar. The fact that these tribesmen were, until recently, headhunters added a certain element to the announcement.

It seems that people passing through at the bed and breakfast had mentioned Alex’s work in microfinance to some people, who had mentioned it to other people. One morning, a delegation of Shuar appeared at the doorstep and invited Alex to visit them. So now we were all off to Macas to see the Shuar. *Continued on Page 9...*

We’ll never forget watching the serious conversations between Alex, the local Ecuadorian government representative and the village elders
- John Fiorillo P’03

Unfortunately, America’s “realpolitik” dictated by oil interests, its pro-Israeli stance, and policy “to support these repulsive regimes, shifting from one to another according to the convenience of the moment” won it the hate of the discontented, impoverished Arab people, who began to see the U.S. as the sole source of their plight.

The fourth step to winning the war on terrorism, Lemos therefore claimed, is the U.S. disentangling the political knots in the peace process in the Middle East, notably by recognizing the necessity of an independent Palestinian state. “It is the only way of withdrawing from terrorists their main, at least rhetorical, cause. And when you have no cause, you can’t mobilize people either.”

The U.S., Lemos argued, needs to engage in a cultural battle as well and “encourage democratic ideas, promoting debates and supporting moderate Arab intellectuals, increasing the appeal of freedom.” Above all, it must help women achieve equal status in Arab societies. This cultural battle is the fifth step towards defeating terrorism.

As could be expected, the audience’s questions gravitated to the impending war against Iraq. Lemos shared that he harbored “mixed feelings” about the issue. He agreed that America should not turn a blind eye to a potential threat again. Political rationality, however,

suggested that President Bush did not have a clear case for declaring war. “This is not a war where we have to always be somewhere, bombing somebody,” he concluded. Imposing a democratic regime upon the Iraqi people would not be nearly as efficient as would be a long-term policy to promote a free and open society.

Apart from speaking to the general public, Lemos’ seven-day visit also included presentations in several government classes, an informal seminar on US.-European relations held in Shain Library, and a presentation to CISLA seniors for IS 401. He finally spoke briefly to CISLA students at the Toor Cummings Center’s Fall Banquet.

CISLA Director Fred Paxton, who coordinated the visit, was delighted to have Lemos speak at Connecticut College. “We don’t have a journalism program; we don’t have a place in the curriculum here for this kind of person to come to campus, so this was a great opportunity to bring somebody different,” he said.

WE NEED TO GO BEYOND THE PERCEPTION OF A “CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS,” FOR IT DOES MORE GOOD THAN HARM TO BIN LADEN’S CAUSE.

Bragging Rights

BY MARY DEVINS

Mary Devins was a presenter at three different conferences last year where she discussed the CISLA model. On January 25 at the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) annual meeting, she was part of a team that discussed “Opportunities for Global Interaction: Three Diverse and Innovative Programs Abroad.” Mary also was asked by the AAC&U to be part of a seminar titled “Global Learning: Student Outcomes for an Interdependent World.” Connecticut College was specifically chosen because of the national reputation of the CISLA program.

Last Spring, CISLA was awarded a mini-grant from the Cooperative Grants Program (COOP) to facilitate a student-designed pre-departure workshop for all Connecticut College students who will study abroad. Over several months a group of six students will meet regularly to choose readings, plan interactive activities and prepare for the all-campus pre-departure orientation.

In November at the regional NAFSA conference in New Hampshire, Mary was part of a panel titled “The International Campus is Here to Stay.” Once again the CISLA model was presented as an innovative and unique approach to undergraduate international education. We were informed that this session won the highest marks of the conference and will be one of the three pan-

els to go to the national conference in Salt Lake City this summer to compete for the Best of Region.

The Institute of International Education has announced that the CISLA certificate program is one of the three finalists in the Internationalizing the Campus category for the Andrew Heiskell Award for Innovation in International Education and will receive an Honorable Mention for 2002-2003. The program will be featured by the IIE Network as a “best practice” in campus internationalization.

This November, Tim Podkul ’03, an anthropology major, was invited to speak at the annual American Anthropological Association meeting in New Orleans. Tim presented the results of his ethnographic work gathered during his study abroad in Bolivia. He also spoke of his experience working with the Mapuche Indians during his CISLA internship in Chile.

Sarah Zisa ’03, an environmental studies major, has been invited to Cuba this summer by Global Exchange and the United Nations, to present her honors thesis examining Denmark’s innovative energy policies and the lessons developing countries could learn from them. Sarah gathered research for her thesis while interning at the Parque Nacional Volcán Poás in Alajuela, Costa Rica.

Working Together For Conservation in Yunnan, China BY MARIA PLACHT '03

I learned more this past summer interning with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) than I have learned during any other summer of my life. Working for an international non-governmental organization (INGO) was an opportunity to gain first hand experience about forming a global civil society. International non-governmental organizations make up a large part of this society, and their projects in villages such as those in Yunnan Province show the



Maria Placht '03 In An Ancient Naxi Village

impact they are creating in all corners of the globe. At the local level these INGOs are confronted with a variety of cultures, languages and customs they must work with in order to solve the problems they face. In TNC's case, these problems mainly consist of environmental and cultural preservation. To successfully lessen the pressures that are destroying these areas, TNC's workers must learn about local populations and their cultures in order to work together to reach a solution. Working at the field office in Lijiang exposed me to cultures, languages and preservation methods I had known nothing about before my internship.

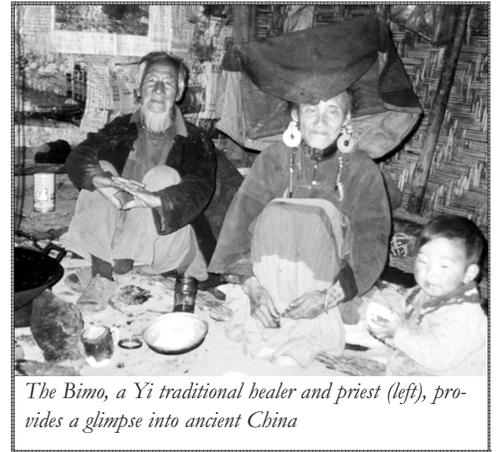
When TNC develops a project in another country, it makes sure to hire native specialists whom they can then work with to bring the local population on board. I realized the importance of this step during my time in Lijiang. The office I worked at only had one American employed there. The other 10 employees were Chinese. This is crucial because these Chinese understand 'the system' much better than any foreigner possibly could. They understand how to work with the local government officials, how to obtain permission for various activities, how the financial institutions operate and what the local reaction will be to certain implementation strategies. In addition, they are able to bridge any barriers in communication. With these skills, the locally hired Chinese TNC staff became the core office members who tackled the task of involving residents of the project villages. Involving people of these villages is critical to the success of the project because it is they who will carry on after TNC has left the area. Teaching the villagers TNC's ideals and principals, as well as convincing them to use TNC methods, is a long,



Local Naxi Women Wearing Traditional 7 Star Blue Capes

difficult process. The Chinese staff understand their countrymen and are much more adept at changing their perception of the environment.

As a member of TNC staff this summer, I was obliged to learn about the cultures of the area so that I could successfully interact with local populations. Perhaps the most incredible experience I gained was learning about the Naxi and Yi minorities of



The Bimo, a Yi traditional healer and priest (left), provides a glimpse into ancient China

China. Even though I have spent a significant amount of time in China, I was always surrounded by the majority group, the Han, and was basically unaware of Chinese minority culture. Lijiang is the ancient home of the Naxi Kingdom, but also has a large population of Yi who are from the Sichuan Province. In order to write the trail guide for Wenhai, a village close to Lijiang, I needed to do rather extensive research on both these minorities. The first half of the guide book was a cultural introduction to the people of the area. The information I discovered came from materials from the Naxi Cultural Center, books and papers TNC had on file and interviews with the people of Wenhai. This was absolutely fascinating. It is impossible to convey to the reader how many amazing stories I read and heard, how many creation myths, stories of adventures running from Red Guards, Yi raids to kidnap slaves, Dongba and Bimo rituals to appease the suicide gods...just to name a few.

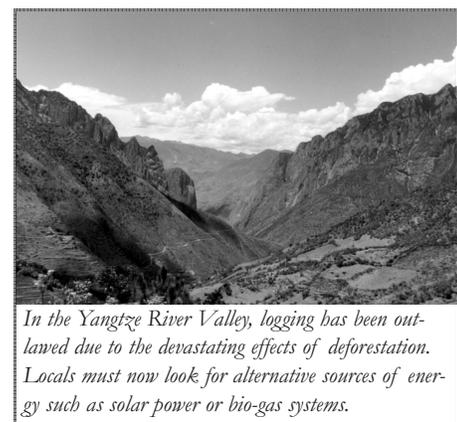
The research I did involved the myths and history of where Naxi and Yi had come from. I came across the Naxi Creation Myth, which was 70 pages long. It involves a great flood, where only one man survives. Lacking a mate on earth, he ventures into heaven in search of a celestial woman. When he finds her, he must go through 99 ordeals to prove his worth to her father. Finally, he succeeds and the couple is allowed to return to earth. I found this book at the Dongba Research Center and I translated it into English. Much more has been written about the Naxi than the Yi, as the Naxi are the more widely studied of the two minorities. Most of my information on the Yi came from talking with Yi people or researchers in the area studying them.

The process of collecting information through personal interviews was one of the most interesting experiences of my life. I took a long weekend to hike up to Wenhai and spend some time getting to know the people of the village I was writing about. I learned about how the living Buddha, hundreds of years ago, had passed through the village, but had left his hat, walking stick and gigantic footprint behind. I learned of the sacred springs surrounding the village, where serpent kings and ladies in white have been seen.

One day I spent the afternoon in the rather smoky hut of a Yi Bimo eating potatoes cooked in five different ways. A Bimo is the head religious figure in Yi culture. He is their priest, shaman, healer, philosopher, teacher and sorcerer. I went to the Bimo to research ancient texts for the trail guide I was writing. Since the liberation and the Cultural Revolution these men have lost their prominence in society. There are very few left. This Bimo told me how he escaped to Wenhai to protect his sacred texts from soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) who were raiding his village. During that time the PLA was burning everything that was not mainstream Han culture. Like the Naxi Dongba, the Bimo are the only members of the Yi who know how to read and write. They create their own religious texts based on those of the Bimo who came before them. They use these texts to perform the vast array of rituals and sacrifices their position requires of them. I learned more than I could ever include in the 40-page trail guide. I was left to sift through the vast amount of knowledge and only put down the very basic facts.

Another focus of my internship was on preservation: environmental and cultural. The two objectives of TNC in Lijiang are alternative energy and eco-tourism. Their 'alternative energy project' endeavors to teach the Chinese how to install solar power and biogas systems in the villages of northwestern Yunnan. They currently have between 10 and 15 village project sites in varying stages of the installation process. Some villages have been using these systems for years and only require checkups. Others are currently building them and need much guidance from TNC. The goal of this project is to switch fuel sources from wood to renewable energy. The deforestation in this area of river sources has had drastic consequences downstream in the Yangtze and Mekong River valleys. So devastating was the damage caused to the Yangtze River valley that the Chinese government has completely outlawed logging in northwestern Yunnan. The people who relied heavily on lumber for

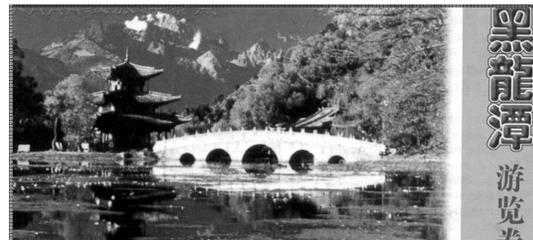
their source of income were suddenly deprived of this source in 1998 and left to their own devices. That is why the 'eco-tourism project' was so important. Its main goal is to provide the villagers with an alternative source of income so that they would not illegally



In the Yangtze River Valley, logging has been outlawed due to the devastating effects of deforestation. Locals must now look for alternative sources of energy such as solar power or bio-gas systems.

continue logging. Eco-tourism provides the villagers with jobs as guides and money from the co-op trekking lodges. My trail guide was a preliminary step to the establishment of an eco-tourism industry in Wenhai.

Along with the 'photo-voice,' the 'eco-tourism project' also tries to preserve the culture of the project site. Tourists are not just com-



黑龍潭
遊覽券

Maria's admissions ticket to the Black Dragon Pool Park (above) plays an essential part of preservation, both culturally and environmentally. According to Maria, "Eco-tourism provides the Naxi and Yi villagers an opportunity to revive their culture and generate much needed revenue."

ing to hike and see the beautiful scenery. The 'photo-voice project' is specifically designed to help the villagers define what part of their culture is important.

TNC supplies the villagers with cameras, teaches them how to use them and then develops the film for them. TNC and the villagers hold a meeting where different villagers present the photographs they have taken and explain their significance. This will promote cultural growth and education for village elders and children alike. These methods of solar power, biogas, eco-tourism and 'photo-voice' amazed me with their productiveness. I was first impressed that TNC chose these methods for this area, and secondly, that they worked so well. They are also interested in the lifestyles of these two Chinese minorities and wish to experience some of the indigenous culture. Unfortunately, the Chinese Communist Party wiped out most of the local minority cultures. Eco-tourism provides the Naxi and Yi villagers an opportunity to revive their culture and generate much needed revenue.

This essay of "what I learned" would not be complete without discussing the language component. I found myself completely immersed in Chinese, even more so than when I went on my study abroad program and had a language pledge. I explained to the Chinese people I lived and worked with, who spoke English, that I would appreciate it if they would only speak to me in Chinese, and to correct me every time I said something wrong. I worked with a relatively younger generation that not only took me up on my request, they took it to the extreme. They barraged me and made fun of me every single time my grammar or tones were incorrect. It was brutal, and it was wonderful. I am extremely grateful for their persistence in improving my level of Chinese.

My experience this summer was magnificently unique. It is reassuring that there are other CISLA students who also did research on relatively unfamiliar topics; however, I feel that I will rarely be able to talk about much of what I learned. I feel that my experiences and knowledge of Lijiang, Wenhai and the cultures and peoples of this area are very personal and will just sit in my head. The incredible Naxi and Yi people, culture, customs, history and stories, while being absolutely incredible, are so obscure that I will probably never be able to discuss them again. My knowledge of the environmental preservation side of the summer will be of great help to me for the rest of my life. I will use this part of my summer for my Honors Thesis, and wherever I work later in life.

When I think back on my summer internship in Ecuador there is not a doubt in my mind that it was one of the most educational experiences of my life. It was educational, not in the sense that I had someone educating me directly, although in many instances I did, but rather in terms of my overall understanding of life and the ways of the world. In an Ecuadorian rainforest in the middle of nowhere, I was faced with the opportunity to both expand my knowledge and understanding of ecological and biological science as well as to explore my overall cultural perspective.

On the first night that my research partners and I arrived at the reserve, we were already exhausted from waking up early, riding in crammed buses and trucks, and hiking through miles of mud. Yet we were so overcome with excitement to start looking for whatever frogs, snakes, and lizards that lay hidden behind the dark curtain of night, that as soon as it got dark we set out almost immediately. On that first night we had no idea what most of the frogs or snakes that we saw were. Everything we caught we put in bags, tied them to our backpacks and brought them home. We had so many animals that we had to spend the whole next day trying to identify them all. With a few books in each of our laps, we flipped through descriptions and pictures until we all came to agreement on the identity of an animal. This process of catching and bringing back almost every animal we found continued for the next week until we slowly began to remember all the physical characteristics of the common species. Then, only previously unencountered animals or those whose identity we could not agree on were brought back. In this process, I learned not only the identities of numerous species of frogs, snakes, and lizards, but also what physical characteristics to examine in order to determine their identity. I also got a lot better at spotting and more importantly, catching animals, so that by the end of seven weeks almost nothing got by me.

It was on these night hikes and daytime identification sessions that I learned the most about the subject of my thesis. My research partners and I were constantly talking about what we knew about different animals, what related books or articles we had read, and what we were thinking of doing with our respective data. It is amazing how much discussion can go on during one four-hour night hike, let alone 35 of them. During these conversations my partners and I would bounce ideas off of one other regarding how to analyze the data. Should we use them to measure the relative diversity of the reserve? Should we come back again and start a monitoring program here for the amphibian and reptile populations? Should we use our data to expand on the current information on the physical appearance and behavioral characteristics of each animal? In the end it turns out I will do all of these things. But when I went into the internship I had no idea what I would do with the data, and without discussion with my partners, I might still have had no idea what to do with the data now.



They really helped me to understand the applications and significance of our study.

However, not everything I learned over this summer had to do with amphibians and reptiles and data analysis. My experiences in such a remote area, interacting with incredibly poor and isolated people, helped me see the world from another perspective. I remember one day talking to one of the local people, Carlos, about rainforest conservation. He was asking me why I was studying amphibians and reptiles, and when I told him conservation he gave me a look like I had my head on backwards. I began talking about why I think conservation is important and when I was done he simply told me that gringos are confused. He continued to tell me that half the people who come to the reserve blame the locals for cutting down the forest. They say that if the locals would just stop cutting the forest there would be no more problems. But Carlos told me that the gringos are the reason that they cut the forest. Either directly, as in the case of U.S. owned logging companies that come in and tell the people they will give them \$5 for every mahogany or ebony tree they cut down, or \$2 for every Sangre de Gallina until only small trees and understory growth remain and even these are eventually killed by direct exposure to sunlight and desiccation. This can also happen indirectly when bananas, chocolate, coffee or palm oil are grown for export to the U.S. on cleared patches of forest. He couldn't understand how some American people can come there and blame them for destroying the rainforest while others come and pay them to cut it down. Before this conversation I had already been told in a government class back at Connecticut College that environmental problems such as deforestation were difficult to resolve. Our class had looked at the problem from one perspective. But by actually talking to someone from the other side of the issue, I gained a much better understanding of the difficulty of resolving environmental issues. I acquired a new appreciation of the complexity of environmental problems within developing countries and realized that the necessary changes to resolve these problems must come from within developed nations.

My cultural perspective was not only expanded through direct contact with the local population, but also through personal obstacles.

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Remembering Margaret Abell Powell '35

BY ROBERT PROCTOR

Margaret Abell Powell, one of CISLA's earliest and most generous benefactors, passed away at the age of 85 last November 28, Thanksgiving Day. She graduated from the Holton-Arms School in 1935 and from Connecticut College in 1939. Margaret traveled around the world with her parents from 1926 to 1928 before returning to Washington. Margaret's great-grandfather Arunah S. Abell founded the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper in 1837.



There is much we have to thank Margaret for: she endowed the annual CISLA ball, which is named after her, and put a million dollars in trust for CISLA's general endowment. More than her material contributions, however, was the encouragement and goodwill Margaret showed towards me and Mary Devins, CISLA's Associate Director, during the early years when we were working hard to get CISLA off the ground. There were inevitable challenges. It helped to get off campus and see what we were creating from the outside. Several times a year Mary and I would visit Margaret and her husband Jack, a retired Washington attorney, in their home in Chevy Chase, Maryland. One summer Margaret and Jack came to visit me, my wife, and children in Venice. We took a gondola ride down the Grand Canal and visited the islands in the lagoon. It was the beginning of a friendship that extended way beyond my years as Founding Director of CISLA. I came to see Margaret and her

husband Jack as role models for my children and for our own CISLA students, a few of whom visited her in Washington. As my children remarked after they met her for the first time, Margaret was an elegant, graceful, and very refined woman. She was gentle. She had her opinions, but was a good listener. She was also very humble and devout, for she had a deep and rich prayer life. Margaret was attracted to CISLA not only because she loved Connecticut

College and wanted to help others acquire the international education she herself had experienced as a young girl, but also because she believed deeply in recognition the liberal arts tradition gives to the contemplative and spiritual side of human nature.

Margaret's work associates in Washington called her "Sunny" because she was always upbeat and optimistic. She gave generously to her grandchildren's educations, encouraged them to travel and see the world, and also to have fun in life. Some years after we inaugurated the annual CISLA ball I learned that Margaret and Jack were considered to be the best ballroom dancers in Washington!

I hope all of us can emulate Margaret Powell: give generously in whatever way we can to the education of our children and our fellow citizens; surround ourselves with art and beauty; bear ourselves and the challenges of life with grace and decorum; and find joy in the world.

The CISLA Experience – A Parent's Perspective

(Continued from page 4)

Our three days in the jungle were truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all three of us. One highlight was standing in the doorway of the village "store" (which was actually a shack that had two cases of Coke, a carton of cigarettes, a bottle of aspirin and a few other staples on mostly bare shelves) watching Alex show five Shuar women, who spoke neither English nor Spanish, how to set up a simple inventory and accounts receivable system. We didn't know she could balance a checkbook!

Another highlight was the elaborate ceremony the village had prepared in honor of Alex and two other women who had introduced her to the tribe. Although this ceremony involved drinking a foul brew made from masticated (don't look that up) yucca, it was a wonderful time with dozens of children who had never seen someone from the outside world. We'll never forget watching the serious conversations between Alex, the local Ecuadorian government representative and the village elders, discussing how to choose projects for development. Imagine; a New York college girl, speaking com-

fortably in Spanish to Ecuadorian headhunters (literally) about projects that might change their lives forever. Later that night she borrowed our binoculars and lined up all of the village children. There under the big Amazonian sky, she gave them each a turn looking at the stars. As they looked through binoculars for the first time in their lives, many of the children reached out to touch the stars that seemed so close. For us, that sums up the CISLA experience. It helps our kids reach for the stars in the hope that they can show others how to reach for them too.

Most parents never have the opportunity to watch the important moments in which their children become adults. They just come home one day transformed. CISLA has given us the gift of watching several of those moments in New London, Santiago, Quito and a village whose name we'll never learn to pronounce.

Thanks CISLA!

In the opening page of the famous CISLA handbook we talk about the CISLA challenge and the mission of encouraging students to become politically concerned, socially engaged and culturally sensitive. The CISLA program is more than an internship and a senior integrative project. We use words like “global citizens” and “public intellectuals.” These are not intended to be just words but rather an encouragement for students leaving the CISLA program to give back, to be part of something bigger than just earning a living and paying back loans. I would like to mention several former CISLA students in particular, and hope that their stories will elicit inspiration and also other stories. If we are indeed a “CISLA family,” we can work together to reach out to others in different ways.

Ben Lodmell '93 graduated with a degree international relations and economics. After graduation he worked in NYC for several different banks before setting up his own financial consulting company from his hometown of Phoenix. Ben's CISLA language was Spanish and he eventually established an office and client base in Madrid. He learned Portuguese and opened an office in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. Ben and I spoke one day and he told me that he could no longer drive through the streets of Rio and see the abject poverty of the myriads of street children and not do something about it. He has started the charity, World Children's Relief Organization, <http://www.worldchildrensrelief.org/> and is devoting enormous time and energy to this initiative.

Kate Greco Fritz '94 and her husband Jason Fritz participated in one leg of the Border-to-Border ride from Canada to Mexico that had been organized by her father-in-law to raise money for pedi-

atric AIDS. They rode 560 miles over 6 days from Jackson Hole, Wyoming to Vail, Colorado. Kate and Jason raised \$9,000 and the whole ride produced a very impressive \$50,000.

Brent Never '99 spent his internship in Benin, West Africa working for the West African Central Bank in the town of Cotonou. His boss was from the small fishing village of Dohi where Brent visited often. Because of local conditions, the able-bodied men



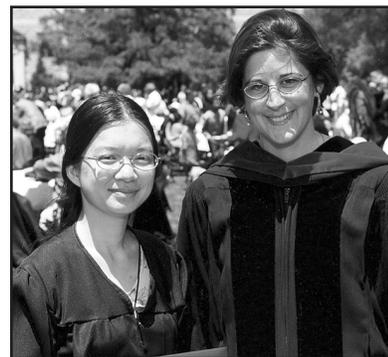
had to leave to find work, leaving behind the women, school-aged children and grandparents. The villagers desperately wanted to educate their children. Dohi was expecting electricity and phones in the near future, and Brent came up with the idea

to send a used computer to ensure that the children could have new opportunities. This became a reality last March (see photo above). Connecticut College donated the used computer, Mary Devins made a presentation the local Lions Club and they generously donated the funds to send the first computer. Brent has raised additional funds and two more computers will be on the way soon. The local New London Lions Club is very fond of this project as they actually have a sister-club in Cotonou. They recently donated extra funds to provided needed software. Give a look at the website <http://php.indiana.edu/~bnever/>

The 2002 Oakes & Lousie Ames Prize Winner

By MARY DEVINS

Eunice Kua '02 was the first CISLA student ever to win the prestigious Oakes and Louise Ames prize for the best honors thesis of the graduating class. Her work was also unique in that she was able to integrate her double major in biochemistry and microbiology into a suitable CISLA liberal arts senior integrative project. Eunice met with some resistance when she proposed the topic of her thesis which was not based on the traditional lab research common to the sciences. She was determined to combine her love of writing with her love of science and she produced the award winning honors thesis titled “Science in the news: DNA, micro arrays, the Human Genome Project and cancer.” Eunice, who is a native of Malaysia, completed her internship at the South Pacific Information Services in Christchurch, New Zealand.



Eunice Kua '02, CISLA First Oakes and Louise Ames Prize Recipient, with Dr. Martha J. Grossel, The George and Carol Milne Assistant Professor of Zoology, at the 2002 Commencement

I went to Colima, Mexico to record the details. I'd studied abroad twice already, had traveled in Europe and Asia and Africa. So while I hadn't been to Mexico before, I wasn't caught off guard by a culture different from my own or surprised by the loneliness that, at some moments, engulfed me, or shocked when I found I had the most pale skin on the local bus. Instead, what was etched in my memory were the details of my interactions with my host-sister Alejandra, whose family lovingly called her "Regañona," because, as they said, she loved to scold people; of my conversation with Alfredo Palacio, who was sprayed down with Lysol while waiting in line to cash his check at the company store on a farm in North Carolina; of Alicia Molla, who, at 60 years old, tripped and badly injured her knee running across the freeway near San Ysidro, California; of the rose 16-year-old Miguel brought me after I met him at a Native American ceremony, where our white gowns blew in the warm night wind atop an excavated site.

I went to Colima to record the stories of transmigrant workers – those who had worked on the other side of Mexico's northern border and then returned home to their families. Some of them, like Alfredo, returned with nothing more than a five-dollar bill and a dashed American dream. Others, like Ruben Campos, rumbled back into Colima in a Ford Pick-up truck and a Colorado license plate, with enough money to start up a small grocery store in the neighborhood of Villa de Alvarez. Antonieta Venancio came home with an American-born son and a broken heart, and Maricela Negrete with a nostalgia for the nomadic life she led for 10 years, beginning when she was 18, following the crops through the seasons. Of course, everyone brought back something differ-

ent from their sojourns in the U.S., but each person returned with a story.

And I, too, returned home – with my own stories and theirs. I've visited Colima outposts in the United States, where friends and neighbors and family members from Colima have set up communities, homes away from home – in Denver and in Los Angeles and even near my home in Oxnard, California. Recording the stories of the people in Colima was like recording the voices of all the Mexican children I had grown up with, but whose stories I'd never heard. It gave a voice to the colorfully-clothed figures I'd grown accustomed to seeing out the car window throughout my childhood, moving in the strawberry fields as we flew past them on the 101.

I didn't finish my CISLA studies with simply a new awareness of a less-spoken-for people and notebooks full of stories. From my sophomore year to the binding of my final project at the campus print shop in the middle of my senior year, CISLA pushed me in a way I hadn't been pushed before. It gave me a confidence only earned through experience. Aside from familiarizing me with recording equipment and interviewing in the field, which I've used daily since graduating and working as a newswriter and producer for WBUR in Boston, and aside from learning to speak Spanish, which I use with my ESL students, all immigrants from Latin America, my experience with CISLA created in me a faith in my ability to come up with my own question, with a formula for answering it, and a strategy for executing it. For me, not only was CISLA an important piece to my story, but it was a practical introduction to the professional world.

In Other Alumni News...



Molly Carrot '99 will soon walk down the aisle with her fiancé Geoffrey Taylor whom she met while working at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.



Wedding bells for Mariko (Wilcox) Guzjur '99 and her husband Igor married in Karvina, Czech Republic last September 2002.



Rebecca Rosen '95 and Peter Shapiro '95, married last April 2002, celebrate with friends, family and C.C. alumni: From Left to Right; Dave Kranowitz; Melissa Carlton (Kranowitz); Carole Clew; Peter Shapiro; Kristin Been; Rebecca Rosen (Shapiro) Ellen Shapiro; Maria Esguerra (Mesa); Martha Maber (Sharp); Mimi Gary; Molly Rosen; Jeannine Thomson (Bishop)

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

The CISLA office would like to gather information on EVERY CISLA alumni to create alumni notes that will enable our former students to keep in touch for networking and social purposes. Please fill out and mail the attached card, and we will then contact you by email to gather additional details. Many thanks for your cooperation. - Mary Devins

Frogs & Logs: An Internship Report

(continued from page 6)

Within my first week at the reserve I struggled to readapt to a lifestyle that I had experienced while studying abroad the previous fall. Washing clothes in rivers, hiking to take an ice cold shower 50-degree weather, eating much smaller than American sized portions of rice and beans, shaving without a mirror, sleeping on a foam pad and waking up with bruises on my hipbones, made me miss all of the small privileges of everyday life in the U.S. that I had overlooked until they were taken away. Now, being back in the U.S., every time I step into a warm shower I think of how lucky I feel not to be freezing cold or not having to hike for five minutes to get there. When I eat a hamburger or a big piece of meat I think of how grateful I am to be able to eat an entire steak for myself unlike those who raise cows for years and wind up having to sell them all without ever being able to appreciate the meat for themselves. It has made me gain a new respect for the people who live without any of these luxuries on a daily basis and never think to complain about the fact that they have to do everything the hard way. I must say it is a great feeling just knowing how incredibly fortunate I am to live where I do and enjoy the opportunities that I have. Every time I even think to complain about something in my life, or get stressed because of something petty, I can just take a step back, removing myself from my everyday perspective and see that these things don't matter, and my unhappiness or anger immediately disappears.

As you can see, the things I learned during my summer internship go far beyond the scope of a traditional education. Although a lot of what I learned had to do with zoology and amphibians and reptiles and how to treat my data, the most important things were those that I learned through experience. I was shown another side of the coin, so to speak, a new perspective of the world, and it has changed the way I both see and understand things in my life and the lives of others. And for this I am unceasingly grateful.



Brian Hutchinson '03 (center) with his colleagues inside the Bilsa Biological Reserve in Ecuador

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