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# CART Sponsored Travel of Faculty Members

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Often, faculty members and librarians at colleges and universities work in relative isolation on specialized topics. Bridgewater is no exception. Correspondence and telephone conversations with colleagues across the country help, but personal contact is irreplaceable. At professional conferences papers that have been submitted, evaluated by peers, and accepted for presentation serve as the stimuli for debate and discussion that would be unlikely even in the largest and most specialized of universities. Informal conversations at book exhibits and in corridors outside meeting rooms are filled with talk about work accomplished and planned. It would be impossible to calculate the amount of research time it would require to accumulate the new information garnered at national meetings.

Hermanas. Hermanas, a multi-cultural collective of women based in Princeton New Jersey, works on issues of peace and justice. The conference made it possible for academics like Faiman-Silva to meet with people who were joining the faculty of a newly developed women's study program at the University of Havana. The intention was to help in the development of this program. Faiman-Silva's presence was sought largely because of her experience as a member of the women's study program at Bridgewater, and as an anthropologist who has studied how various systems of social stratification influence the lives of women in them. While in Cuba she conducted an educational workshop, consisting of a talk and discussion session, on her anthropological research.

Travel to meetings like this often allow the participant to learn outside the confines of the walls of the conference. In this case, Faiman-Silva was eager to learn about a country that has, because of political circumstances, been made to seem alien, and even demonic, to many Americans. Cuba is geographically

## CART Sponsored Travel

One of the first goals of the Center for the Advancement of Research and Teaching (CART) has been to help pay for professional travel by faculty and librarians of Bridgewater State College. In this issue of *Bridgewater Review*, we report on some of the travel CART supports, and on how the participants benefit from it. Some of the following projects have already been completed, while others are scheduled.

In early January of this year, Sandra Faiman-Silva of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology was able to travel to Cuba to take part in a conference held under the auspices of

very close to us, but we know relatively little about it. For Faiman-Silva, the chance to see some of the country first hand was especially important given the widespread collapse of socialism around the globe and the possibility that the same thing might happen in Cuba.

Karl Schnapp, a member of the English Department, was able to present a paper at the National Conference on College Composition and Communication in San Diego in April of 1993. Dr. Schnapp's presentation, titled "Education against plutocracy," (discussed in greater detail in the Research Note

report in this edition of *Bridgewater Review* ) developed out of his experiences teaching a composition course which was focused on how education works in America. As schools teach skills and knowledge, they also pass on to new generations the beliefs, values, information and intentions that operate the American society of their parents. In short, education helps to reproduce America from one generation to the next. Through their reading and writing, students in the course work to develop their critical thinking about this underlying ideology of education. Schnapp's paper discussed the way this process worked.

In most schools, it is unlikely that more than one faculty member would be familiar with the issues raised in such a course. From Schnapp's point of view, the value of presenting an academic paper is made clear when a faculty member gets to meet the few other people who are doing the same sorts of things. Conversations during papers sessions and afterwards stimulate new insight into familiar problems. In a sense, conferences create the "assignments" for academics.

In November of 1992 Lydia Gerhardt and Debra Waterman, who teach in the Burnell School on the campus, made a joint presentation at the National Association for the Education of Young Children in New Orleans. Their work was designed to illustrate a model they had used to teach about diversity in the classroom. Specifically, they had data from their classrooms that demonstrated the value of personal experience in helping children to grasp the meaning of similarity and difference among people. During the year of the most recent Summer Olympics, they conducted their own academic olympics, pitting their second grade classes against one another in learning competitions.

teach about ethnicity, and to learn from the experiences of other presenters.

Paul DuBois of the Department of Movement Arts, Health Promotion and Leisure Studies received support for travel to a conference in Indianapolis on "Coaching America's Coaches." DuBois has, for a number of years, taken part in this national conference, serving as a leader of roundtable discussion groups. His talk focused on three topics: 1) methods of recruiting coaches at all levels, (community to Olympics), 2) how parents can best be oriented to their children's sports programs, and 3) how to put into place coaching-education programs at the college level.

DuBois' attendance did more than allow him to lead these discussions. His yearly trips to the conference also allow him to catch up on what is new in the field. The informal discussions and contacts are extremely important at conferences like this. It was at this meeting that he became aware of several programs that have since been put in place at Bridgewater, including a program about coaching education for women.

Lastly, in February of 1993 Margaret Snook of the Department of Foreign Languages attended the Conference on Hispanic Languages and Literatures in New Orleans. Snook presented a paper which analyzed a short story by the Argentine writer Adolfo Bioy Casares. The paper, titled "Change and Autonomy in 'Margarita o el poder de la farmacopea' (Margarita or the power of medicine)," discusses issues of autonomy and relationships with others. The story is a fantasy in which a character searches for a unified sense of self, exploring the boundaries between the mind and body.

Snook has published four articles on Adolfo Bioy Casares and needs the responses of other experts to help with her larger

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Each class focused on a country. Gerhardt's class studied England, and Waterman's class studied Brazil. Each class was responsible for the investigation of 25 core topics such as the form of government of the country, its housing, food, dance, music, and geography. The classes used a number of techniques to examine these issues, such as performing plays, presenting readings of literature, contacting pen pals and demonstrating language differences. Videotapes of their activities were played at the conference in collage form. Their aim was to demonstrate the approach they had employed to

project of a book on his work. The concentration of scholars of Hispanic literature increases the likelihood of finding people who will know what she's talking about.

The work summarized here would be understood better if you had been able to attend the various conferences. This fact should illustrate the importance of such travel for scholars who work in specialized areas. The few discussed here are only a small portion of those who have been supported by grants from CART.