

THE RICE CENTER FOR CULTURAL STUDIES

**APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF THE ROCKEFELLER RESIDENCY FELLOWSHIPS
(15 February 1991)**

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A. Background: General Problem Statement

Rice University is attempting to create a special place in the rising national debate about the state of liberal education, and the role therein of non-Western cultures.

The National Debate. For two decades now curricula at various universities have been adjusted to reflect the changing nature of the integration of the globe. Recognition of such changes have four aspects: *epistemological, practical, historical, and socio-symbolic*: (1) For many it is no longer possible to generalize about the nature of truth, beauty, community, social relations, historical change, etc., based merely on the experience and perspectives of northwestern Europe and the United States, and based on pedagogies of reading and curricula of texts that were constructed for needs of earlier nation-building (and often nationalist and/or imperial) education systems. (2) Moreover, it has become a truism and cliché that non-Western cultures in today's world are not merely repositories of other experiences and perspectives, but are integral actors in the international system. Americans need to understand the people they interact with if only for practical reasons. (3) Thirdly, and perhaps least well recognized, "Western Civilization" has itself been profoundly structured and formed through a dialogic interaction with non-Western cultures, be it -- to take only post-medieval times -- the recuperation of Greek learning via Arabic civilization in Spain and Sicily ("the Renaissance"), the reinvigoration of German philosophy by engagement with Indian and Persian philosophy (Goethe, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche), or the florescence of surrealist and cubist modern art through engagement with African, Melanesian, and Amerindian aesthetics. Even the heart of classical Greek culture was not only formed through a dialogic interaction with Persian, Levantine, and Egyptian cultures, but can only be understood in the larger framework of Indo-Iranian, Indo-European, and even more widespread mythic symbol systems (as the works of Georges Dumézil, Marcel Detienne, and others have demonstrated). (4) Fourthly, the media and methods of representation of reality in all fields of knowledge (from the humanities to the sciences) are undergoing rapid change thanks to film, the computer, and other elements of the "information society" era. The debates between rationalism and traditionalism, or between positivism and humanism, are rapidly becoming archaic, as both the nature of science changes and systematic knowledge in the humanities and social sciences grows. Many of the issues of cultural studies detailed below in terms of traditional and recent disciplinary labels ("comparative literature" or "media studies" or "history and philosophy of science" for instance) in fact have shared problematics over the issues of changing means of representation and understanding. Rice is an institution which might be able to develop a pioneering interface between the skills of reading and construction of knowledge in the sciences and humanities: interestingly, this interest on campus at present emerges within the Feminist Reading group as well as within anthropology-linguistics-semiotics, and the Scientia Colloquium.

The introduction of non-Western cultures into the liberal arts curriculum does not mean, as conservatives fear, the destruction of moral values or of precision of thinking or of technical skills. Quite to the contrary. The introduction of non-Western cultures into liberal arts thinking, however, does pose a challenge of implementation, and must be pursued simultaneously at three levels: *curriculum*, *faculty education*, and *research*.

Rice University is perhaps the smallest of the elite, nationally ranked, universities in the country. Its Quantum Institute, engineering and mathematics programs on the science side of campus are nationally known both for innovative research and for the students produced. On the humanities and social science side of campus, Rice has recently become visible, and much talked about, for a series of books that have made *cultural critique* through the *juxtaposition of non-Western and Western cultures* central to the liberal arts enterprise. This series of books, in part were the outcome of intense cross-disciplinary, and cross-cultural discussions within the Rice Circle, founded in 1982 (see below under "Rice Circle"). ["Juxtaposition" here is neither a gimmicky "post-modern" pastiche, nor does it mean the simple use of, say, one person's understanding of Samoan adolescence to critique American adolescent patterns, to demonstrate that there are alternative ways of arranging things that seem "natural" to each society. Rather it means to take up Margaret Mead's challenge in a serious fashion, investigating each side of a comparison thoroughly, and thereby provide secure foundations for generalizations, be they about socialization and historical causation or about the rhetorical operations of poetry and the hermeneutics of art. Such a project must be a collective one, in which individual expertises can be so stated that they can contribute to general intellectual understanding.] This series of books, and the broader universe of ideas and problematics they engage, including this idea of *cultural critique* or *cultural studies*, provided the initial impetus for the Center for Cultural Studies, and has provided the basis for the major Center seminar series on Moral Sensibilities in Historical and Cultural Context (1987-89) and on Rhetoric and Representation (1989-91), as well as for the formulation of the Rockefeller Residency Program to bring scholars to Rice with expertise in African and Asian cultures that could be put into comparative play with Western expertises.

Since 1987 Rice has been engaged in a major new **institution building** effort for which this idea of *cultural critique* or *cultural studies* is central. The new Center for Cultural Studies, established in 1987, is one of five major faculty development and research centers, designed to provide a structure for the development and growth of the faculty, as well as, on a daily basis, forums for interdisciplinary discussions and research. The Center for Cultural Studies is the center for the Humanities (with participation of the social sciences). Most new faculty hirings are now made with the idea of the Center in mind: most job announcements include this. In addition, the Center runs faculty Workshops, and a public Center Seminar. (See section on "The Center for Cultural Studies", below.) There are **two** initial phases of this institution building effort:

Phase One: *cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, and comparative faculty diversification.* In 1970 Rice had no research faculty with non-Western expertise. Since then, and particularly in the past five years, under the leadership of a new President, George Rupp, Rice has been making steady improvement. As a small university, Rice has no illusions of building depth of expertise in any one region that could compete with the area studies programs at larger universities. Its strategy, on the contrary, is to capitalize on a nascent and vigorous environment of serious interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and cross-humanities-social science discussions. The Center for Cultural Studies fosters this environment through support of small working groups or Workshops in particular areas where coalitions of people with complementary interests exist, and through the use of its public Center Seminar as an arena where issues of cultural critique, or juxtaposition of cultures, are systematically pursued. But basic to these efforts is the recruitment of faculty with cross-cultural, comparative and interdisciplinary interests. In the past few years we have managed to transform the history department from a purely Americanist-Europeanist one with appointments of tenured or tenure track professors in African history, Black American and Caribbean History, Islamic History, Byzantine History, and Jewish History (we already had a China historian); the French department from one which was purely language and literature into an innovative French Studies Department with four new appointments including the philosopher Jean-Joseph Gioux, a nineteenth century popular culture historian, and a specialist in poststructuralist literary criticism (we already had a specialist in North African Francophone literature); and we are presently engaged in transforming the religious studies department from a Christian theology stronghold into a world religions department with the appointment of a Buddhist scholar, and two chairs being currently recruited. There have also been individual new appointments in English, art history (a Japan-China specialist has been a particularly valuable appointment active in Center activities in what otherwise has remained a fairly traditional enclave), classics, and philosophy.

Phase Two. "Phase One" continues, but in addition, now with three transformed departments in the humanities plus anthropology in the social sciences (and allied individuals in other departments), it is time for Rice to begin discussing the feasibility of a **graduate program** in cultural studies. As presently envisioned this would be a diploma or joint degree that candidates would pursue along with degrees in traditional disciplines. The cultural studies credential should make Rice Ph.D.s more attractive in a market that seems to want such expertise while rightly suspicious of those who have no in-depth disciplinary training. The project of planning and implementing a graduate program itself can help focus the institutional effort at Rice to think through the intellectual issues listed above in the opening paragraphs (under "the National Debate"), that is, not merely curricular issues, but more trenchantly the adjustment of frames of knowledge to contemporary needs in a rapidly globalizing and changing world, full of conflicts and disputes over the ways in which knowledge is constructed and put to use.

The Rockefeller Resident Fellowship Program has been extremely helpful in the Phase One effort to enrich our faculty both by providing outside legitimation and leverage and by providing demonstration, through persons with additional expertise, of the kinds of enrichment this faculty could gain with additional appointments of persons with cross-cultural, comparative and interdisciplinary knowledge and interests. The Rockefeller Program could be equally instrumental in the Phase Two effort, just beginning, of helping to think through a possible cultural studies teaching and research program, one that through this effort will also, hopefully, help contribute to the national agenda setting and definition of issues. Quite apart from these two institution building efforts, the Rockefeller Fellows have been and would continue to be valuable catalysts in our several on-going faculty discussion Workshops, as well as new more issue- and publication-directed workshops planned for the next few years.

Our criteria of selection of fellows would remain as we have stressed in the past: (a) expertise in some area of African or Asian cultures, (b) excellence of scholarship in a field that has some immediate comparative implications for the assumed knowledge base or presuppositions of Western civilization, (c) interest and ability to engage in such comparative and interdisciplinary discussions. Thus, for example, we would be interested in someone who does, say, theories of agency and moral responsibility in Buddhist philosophy, or someone who does aesthetic principles in African art, or someone who makes visible feminist or subaltern or culturally interreferential or mixed media discourses in modern Asia, rather than someone who does a critical edition of a Buddhist text, or simply the description of a village or religious practices in Zaire, or accounts of India through British eyes.

Rockefeller Fellows are Visiting Fellows of the Center for Cultural Studies. They are provided office space, secretarial help, and access to all university facilities, including the library, computer, and recreational facilities. They are invited and expected to participate in the Center Seminar, and in one or more of the Workshops. They are invited to present their own research either through these forums or through more occasional forums under the Center umbrella. They are encouraged to apply through the Center budget for funds to bring speakers to campus that can help their work and amplify their contributions to the intellectual discussions at Rice.

B. The Rice Center for Cultural Studies

The Center for Cultural Studies at Rice University is one of five major faculty development and research centers at Rice. The five centers, set up under the new administration of President George Rupp, provide a structure for the future planning and growth of the University, as well as, on a daily basis, forums for interdisciplinary discussions and research. While the Center structure has been in place only as of the 1987-88 academic year, the Centers draw upon previously existing structures and groups. The oldest of the Centers recognizable in its present form is the Rice Quantum Institute, approximately eighteen years old, which has provided Rice with a distinctive and national research reputation in physics and chemistry.

The Center for Cultural Studies serves the humanities at Rice with the participation and support also of the social sciences.. It is new as of 1987-88, but draws upon a series of previously existing institutionalized (i.e. not ephemeral) faculty discussion groups, Mellon Postdoctoral Seminars, a three year faculty seminar on the Culture of Capitalism, a speakers' series funded by the Dean of Humanities on how feminist scholarship has altered research and problem formulation in different disciplines, and other initiatives to establish programs in Asian Studies, Ancient Studies, and Humanities as an integrated field of inquiry. What has been needed has been a mechanism to make these efforts mutually reinforcing. The Center for Cultural Studies provides such a mechanism through a three fold structure of (1) Faculty Enhancement (new hires), (2) Workshops, and (3) Public Seminars. The mechanism has had visible payoffs.

The intellectual goals of the Center for Cultural Studies is to provide a facilitating set of forums of interdisciplinary and cross-cultural discussions in the humanities and social sciences. By this we mean three things: First, *interdisciplinary* discussions to avoid parochialization and isolation, and to reinvigorate the humanities as a *unified field of investigation*. Second, *cross-cultural* comparative perspectives to avoid ethnocentrism and lack of grounds from which to question one's own premises. Cross-cultural here includes cross-temporal historical comparisons and contrasts, but is meant to emphasize that Europe is a useful but not sufficient basis of comparison in the contemporary world. This is one area in which the Center is having an immediate impact, and the Rockefeller Fellows a visible role, in aiding the Dean of Humanities long standing efforts to generate more interest in his departments to hire persons with Asian, African, Middle Eastern, and Latin American interests. This is not just a matter of informational coverage in an age when we live in an increasingly interdependent world. It is also a matter of basic epistemological fundamentals as anyone who speaks a foreign language, particularly a non-Indo-European one, knows. Third, *comparative*: one can no longer, in the contemporary worlds of comparative literature, historical explanation, philosophical reasoning, and sociological differentiation, afford

to make generalizations or teach general truths based on the experience and point of view of only a small part of the globe.

The goal, in other words, is to stimulate research and teaching that is on the cutting edge both of disciplinary developments and general intellectual thought.

From past experience with Mellon post-doctoral fellows as well as other visitors, we think Rice provides a rich environment able both to provide and welcome stimulation from resident fellows. And we hope the experience with Rockefeller Fellows as indicated in their letters appended to this application bears this out.

Of the three part structure structure of the Center, of most direct relevance to the Resident Fellow program are the Workshops and the Seminar. However, a brief overview of the Faculty Enhancement efforts may serve as useful background, to provide one way of characterizing the development of the research environment into which they come. The transformation of three departments -- history, French studies, and religious studies -- has already been described above, but equally important are a series of cross-disciplinary coalitions that also support the feasibility of comparative, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary work.

One of the most important functions of the Center for Cultural Studies is to provide a set of interests Departments must consider in pursuing new hires. Not all new hires, obviously, need be connected directly to the Center, but as an intellectual force on campus, the Center should serve to facilitate hiring people who in addition to being first rate specialists are also interested in joining more general discussions. A number of recent developments may illustrate the way in which the Center structure helps institutionally reinforce cross-disciplinary coalitions.

(i) Women's Studies. A few years ago the Dean of Humanities funded a speakers' series in which leading feminist scholars in a series of fields came to Rice to evaluate how feminism had changed their respective fields over the past decade. This was followed by the hiring of Professor Jane gallop, a leading scholar in French feminist literary theory to teach women's studies. Professor Gallop not only organized a program of studies for undergraduates, but also organized a Feminist reading Group. This Group attracted participants (male and female) from English, Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, Art, Economics, Music, and History. The Feminist Reading Group remains one of the most vital of faculty discussion groups on campus. Leadership of the Women's Studies Program has now passed to Professor Helen Longino, a philosopher of science, and a new hire in the Philosophy Department this year. At the same time this year, a formal undergraduate Women's Studies Program has been passed by the Rice Faculty. The English Department last year hired two assistant professors with strong feminist theory interests, raising the complement in that department to three. And of course, a few years ago, the Anthropology Department was given a new enhancement position, and hired Prof. Sharon Traweek from MIT who

apart from studying the anthropology of science (high energy physicists in Japan and the U.S.) also has strong interests in the study of feminism and science. One of the potentials of the mix of people at Rice, which has been given considerable discussion, is the exploration of issues around the subject of women and science, under the leadership of Professors Traweek and Longino, but with the supporting interests of a number of other people.

(ii) Islam and Middle East Studies. Rice University is located in the oil capital of the United States: Houston is full of people who have worked in the Middle East, whose lives continued to be directly influenced by the conomy of Middle East oil. Houston is also home to sizeable Arab and Iranian populations. Until 1981 Rice had only one faculty member, a political scientist, who did active research on the Islamic world, and that in the Far East, primarily Malaysia and Indonesia. In 1981 an anthropologist was hired who works on Iran and the Shi'ite world. In 1987 a new enchancement position in Islamic history was made available, and Dr. Paula Sanders was hired. The Center for Cultural Studies was active in that search committee, looking to ensure that the person hired be not just someone who could teach a survey course in Islamic civilization, or not just an intellectual historian who had worked on a particular figure, but someone who could engage in comparative discussions with historians of Europe, and who might have a sense of comparative sociology that could engage with sociologists and anthropologists. The following year a position was created in Jewish History, and Dr. Talya Fishman was hired. Meanwhile the Arab-American community of Houston has been attempting to raise money for a chair in Arab studies: for a moment it looked as if we were in the final stretches of this drive with help from individuals in the Emirates, but with the outbreak of the war, that part of the effort came to an abrupt halt, although the fund raising continues at home. The Religious Studies Department has in the meantime been given a chair in Jewish studies, and is actively fund raising for support of Islamic studies. In other words, there is emerging a small working group of seven (and hopefully soon nine) very active people who like and work well with each other. In addition to the four people enumerated above, there are two people in religious studies (Prof. Don Benjamin, a specialist in form criticism of the Old testament with interests in the social history of ancient Israel; and Prof. Werner Kelber, a specialist on questions of orality and literacy in the world of early Christianity), and one one in history (a Byzantine scholar, Prof. Michael Maas, whose interests in state ritual parallels Paula Sanders' work on Fatimid Egypt).

(iii) Asian Studies. With the recent hires of a specialist in Tibetan Buddhism (Anne Klein) and Japanese and Chinese Art (Richard Wilson), both of whom should be tenured this year, we now have a Asian Studies working group of seven that extends across history (Richard Smith, a China historian), linguistics (Doug Mitchell in Sanskrit, Lily Chen in Chinese), anthropology (Steve Tyler and M. Fischer work on India), religious studies (Klein), and art history (Wilson). An Asian Studies Undergraduate Major has recently been passed by the Rice Faculty. A chair in philosophy and religious studies is currently being recruited that may well fall to an Asian religion. Smith,

Klein, Tyler, Wilson and Fischer have all been active members of the Center for Cultural Studies. Klein has been particularly active in organizing the Buddhism and Deconstruction conference, and in bringing a steady stream of Buddhist scholars and ritualists to the Rice campus.

(iv) World Religions. Two chairs are now being recruited in Religions Studies: a newly endowed chair in Jewish studies, and the Rayzor chair in Philosophy and Religious Studies. That Department is undergoing a major transformation, which these chairs hopefully will clinch, from a traditional Christian theology department to a real world religions department. The new chairman, Werner Kelber, is an active interlocutor with people in other disciplines on issues of orality-literacy, interpretive theory, hermeneutics and phenomenology, and comparative religion, and is a strong supporter of the Center's comparative, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary interests. He is as well engaged in an active search to find funds to support Islamic studies at Rice. Anne Klein, our new hire in Buddhist studies, is not only a superb scholar but one of the most active members of the Center, and a key leader of the new Asian Studies Program. But quite apart from the Religious Studies Department as a department, there is a coalition of persons across departments that makes serious comparative work in world religions possible. We have at present for Islam an anthropologist (Fischer), a historian (Sanders), and a part-time lecturer (Abedi); for Zoroastrianism an anthropologists (Fischer); for Buddhism, a religious studies person (Klein) and an art historian (Wilson); for Confucianism, a historian (Smith); for Judaism, a historian (Fishman), a biblical form criticism specialist (Benjamin), and an open chair to be filled in religious studies; for Hinduism, an anthropologist (Tyler), and for Jainism, an anthropologist (Fischer); for Christianity, several people including a sociologist (Bill Martin), and Werner Kelber; and occasional visitors in African religion (this year Prof. Mugambe, a Ugandan who teaches at the University of Nairobi in Kenya).

(v) Ancient or Mediterranean Studies. Classics at Rice until recently had been one of those parochial service fields, focussing exclusively on language and reading the classic texts. It had not attempted to encompass the exciting developments that have revolutionized the field in recent decades. New hires in late classical history (the Byzantinist, Dr. Michael Maas), classics (a Greek specialist, Dr. Harvey Yunis), and most recently ancient philosophy (Dr. Morrison), together with persons in religion (Prof. Werner Kelber), archeology (Prof. Rod McIntosh), and art history (Prof. Walter Widrig) have allowed the recent creation of an undergraduate major in Ancient Studies, as well through the Center, an Ancient Studies Workshop. Together with the recent hires of historians of Islam (Paula Sanders) of early modern Europe (Carol Quillian) and of Jewish medieval history (Talya Fishman) there is also an effort, with the encouragement of the Center, to treat the entire Mediterranean basin as a comparative field that includes the southern as well as northern littorals.

The point of sketching these examples, and several others could be cited, is that the Center is a

mechanism to provide coherence across disciplines at a University that has been very traditionally organized into entrenched Departments. Some of these Departments, such as English are first rate and reasonably broad in their coverage. Others, such as History or Philosophy have been excellent in what they do, but not broad in their coverage: History once was heavily Americanist (and is now much expanded), Philosophy heavily analytic. The Center provides a way, without challenging the Departmental prerogatives or interests, in finding ways to support other interests. The Center is not the only such mechanism, but it is a major one at present.

Formulating a Cultural Studies Graduate Program. Insofar as the discussions about a graduate program become an institution building mechanism of the Center, not only in the literal sense but more importantly in the sense of deepening and extending the collective intellectual discourse and vision of the Center, in which future Rockefeller Fellows would be either actively participants or at the very least part of the discussion merely by the example of their own research interests and presence, it might be worth sketching out a few preliminary considerations. The mechanics of formulating a graduate program need not concern us here other than to say that they presumably will first involve coming up with a reading list and perhaps a core course or two by a steering committee (to be formed later this spring) that would then circulate proposals for faculty consideration. In this process, the Center Seminar or a faculty workshop would serve as a vehicle for public discussions of some of the key intellectual issues. One way of beginning to think through the issues and topics that need to be included is ~~to put~~ to turn our watchwords of *cross cultural comparison* and *cultural critique* back upon the several extant notions of cultural studies themselves. A very preliminary and incomplete map might look as follows.

Internationally, there are a number of different perspectives that go under the name of cultural studies, that have arisen out of different national historical contexts. As these various perspectives increasingly circulate across national boundaries, they provide a rich ensemble for comparative work: they themselves constitute one emergent multidimensional framework and subject for cultural studies, as well as constant reminders of how knowledge is situated, framed and understood from different positionings on such issues as:

- (1) the global pluralizing as well as unifying forces which are generating both multicultural diversity within nation-states and transnational public arenas, including reevaluations and new comparative perspectives on history, philosophy, and literature;
- (2) the associated realms of science and technology as components of thinking in the humanities and social sciences (especially the ecological and biological sciences that are gradually replacing physics as key paradigms and metaphors for thinking about knowledge, human action, and the consequences of action),
- (3) the emergence of the visual and the performative as ever more complex figural means of rapid and multilevel communication -- undermining, supplementing, and interacting in new ways with literacy and the print media -- not only in the arts, but in the worlds of commerce and politics, pedagogy and research; and providing new tools for reevaluating products of the arts and

humanities in the past.

A quick and partial survey of some of the differential national contexts out of which cultural studies are emerging may provide a backdrop for recognition of how the comparative, interdisciplinary, and cross-cultural *already* constitute the grounds of the international academy. It may also serve to remind us that the variety of approaches that go under the name cultural studies are patterned and grounded, and need not be seen as random or diffuse. This kind of mapping -- that provided here is only suggestive -- can also provide a means for rethinking and reinvigorating area studies programs that have fossilized into routines of viewing only through American or European lenses.

In Great Britain, for instance, cultural studies -- itself a product of a new class with distinctive ethnic and cultural experiences entering the intelligentsia partly through the arts colleges and through institutes attached peripherally to Red Brick Universities (e.g. the Birmingham Center for Cultural Studies) -- evolved from a concern with British class, race-ethnicity, and political consciousness. It turned with considerable productive vigor to questions of popular culture and media, absorbing particularly in film theory systematic approaches from structuralism and psychoanalysis (e.g. the journal *Screen*). More recently, it has turned to issues of postcolonialism the transformation of Britain and the new Europe by immigration from the former colonies and from the third world more generally, and the reorganization of mass political forces (e.g., the group at Essex around Homi Bhabha and Ernesto Laclau).

In the United States, by rather sharp contrast, cultural studies emerged from four quite different sources. It has been more eclectic (less theory driven, until very recently, than the marxist, structuralist, or psychoanalytic enthusiasms in Britain) and has drawn more centrally from the cross-cultural perspectives, ethnographic techniques, and culture-theory of anthropology. One strand of development has been through American Studies, itself a new field that grew out of a need to free studies of American history and literature from being appendages of British literature and European history, and that in the 1960s underwent a rebirth and reorientation from analysis of single "key" myths, symbols or texts to questions of actual reception and creation of cultural discourses. These interests went under the labels of popular culture and practices, reception theory, and the formation of consciousness under conditions of pluralism. Oddly enough, although "America" has always been a key reference point in European social theory for the "modern" and the "postmodern" (from Marx's notes on the lack of a traditional class structure in the U.S., to Kojève's interpretation of Hegel invoking America rather than the U.S.S.R. as the "end of history", to current theorists like Baudrillard and Lyotard), American Studies has remained underdeveloped in social theorizing, and indeed theoretically and methodologically unfocussed in any way; and so one of the sources of the turn to Cultural Studies is out of dissatisfaction with the lack of rigor in American Studies. Another source of Cultural Studies in the United States has been the direct reworking of traditional social theory and methods of analysis in the humanities: the Program in the History of Consciousness at Santa Cruz has been a small but

visible creative force in this arena, as have such programs as the Committee on Social Thought (in the early 1970s) at the University of Chicago, the critical theory groups at the University of Minnesota and at Stanford, the comparative literature program at Duke, and the Center for Psychocultural Studies in Chicago. A number of these programs have creatively brought together humanities and social science perspectives. A fourth current of discussion that has helped constitute Cultural Studies in the past decade has come from the techniques of systematic reading/interrogation of texts deriving from structuralist and poststructuralist perspectives disseminated especially through the English and French departments at Yale, Johns Hopkins, and the University of California at Irvine. Among the controversies and creative ferment stimulated by Derridean, Lacanian, Kristevan and other poststructuralist reading strategies has been feminist theory (as distinct from and sometimes rubbing in irritation against Women's Studies).

In France, these reading tactics -- and increasingly now also in the U.S. -- have transformed the fields of classics, philosophy, art history, to a lesser extent history, as well as literary criticism, semiotics, film and media studies. Perhaps nowhere is the productivity of these methodologies more transformative than in classics where suddenly worlds of symbolic logic in Greek mythology have opened up that provide entry both to conceptual distinctions that have worked sub rosa throughout the history of philosophy in Europe, and also to new comparative bases for thinking through the conceptual structures of cultures in Africa, Asia, and pre-Columbian America. (I am thinking here of the work of Vernant, Detienne, and Vidal-Naquet; but also the current reevaluation of the interwar and early postwar European philosophies of Heidegger, Sartre, and the grounds of deconstruction, de Man, Derrida, et al.)

In Germany, the intellectual inputs for Cultural Studies come primarily from (a) the legacy of the pre-war Frankfurt School, which focussed psychoanalytic and (non-Stalinized) marxian questions on the critique of ideology and the mass culture industry (enormously influential on the generation of American intellectuals who came of age in the 1960s); (b) hermeneutic techniques of reading (Heidegger, Gadamer) which provide a complement and counter-point to the French structuralist and post-structuralist ones); and (c) the rationalist synthetic tradition represented by Habermas.

With the opening of Eastern Europe, potential new inputs from national contexts there may re-emerge: in particular renewed attention and efforts to rethink the modernist tradition of Prague from which much of the basic work in twentieth century linguistics and semiotics of art derives. (This reconsideration may well have been initiated by the Prague Modernism show curated at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts in collaboration with the national museums of Czechoslovakia.

But there are also increasingly important traditions of Cultural Studies input from outside Europe and the U.S. India, for instance, contributes a perspective on so-called "Subaltern Studies", a reevaluation of history, literature, and cultural processes by reading "against the grain" in imperial and colonial records for native perspectives; but India also has some sophisticated work going on in the boundaries between psychoanalysis, anthropology, history, and political theory (especially at the Center for Developing Societies in New Delhi); and in the interface between theory developed in the academy and in the effort to keep alive India's social reform movements

(e.g. in the Lokayan Bulletin collective, and the numerous social movements chronicled for instance in A. Bonner's Averting the Apocalypse). Particularly fascinating (and critical, both intellectually and practically) is how different science (especially big science, government sponsored science) and ecology movements look from the perspective of India than they do from the perspective of the U.S.

Brazil, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, Turkey, Egypt, China are among other places where serious work is being done in national contexts that provide alternative perspectives.

For some of these traditions of thinking, there are U.S. centers that provide the basis for a network that Cultural Studies can be built upon: e.g., for Africa, the new Institute at Northwestern; for China, the Center for Psychosocial Studies at Chicago which serves as a focus for young Chinese intellectuals who provide a perspective on literature, politics and history as well as attitudes towards Western models quite different from postcolonials such as, say, Indian intellectuals.

Another point of access to the global reorganization of culture that is now occurring with increasing speed is through comparative literature and media studies. Even within the English language, writers such as Wole Achebe, Bharati Mukherjee, and Salman Rushdie are infusing English with linguistic and cultural resources from other languages: no longer is this like old creole processes, isolated by class, but a dynamic that will increasingly work across the class structure (albeit in differential ways). The same is happening with other languages as well. Some universities not only have comparative literature programs, but emergent literature programs for literatures that no longer are based in nation-state contexts: e.g. the program at the University of Texas.

In sum: attention to the national contexts, the social groundings, and the alternative perspectives on "truth, beauty, and knowledge" embedded in these contexts and groundings is one way to ensure that theories are not universalized and hypostasized prematurely. A cultural studies graduate program could be organized both around emergent topic areas such as the three enumerated above, and attention to the relation between theories that address these topics and their historical and social groundings. Such a perspective binds together traditional disciplines and adds new questions and techniques. A graduate program requiring students to have both disciplinary training and participation in course and writing work that put that disciplinary training into play in new arenas, contexts, and questions, could be both exciting and reinvigorating to the humanities and social sciences at large. It is to support Rice's participation in this set of discussions and matrices for research that the Rice Center for Cultural Studies was established, and that the Rockefeller Resident Fellowships have been enormously useful in fostering.

C. Programs of the Center

1. **The Center Seminar.** The Center sponsors and funds a Seminar on a broad interdisciplinary topic over a two year period. Six Rice faculty are given one term's freedom from teaching over the two years term to organize and constitute this Seminar for themselves and for the Rice community. This is intended to be a primary forum for the development of a cultural studies discourse on campus. The Seminar Fellows are given time to discuss their own work with colleagues from other disciplines and perspectives, so as to encourage formulations in comparative, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary terms that can reach broader intellectual concerns and deepen their analytic reach. The Seminar Fellows are also charged with providing public events that can display the perspectives developed in the Seminar and engage the wider Rice, Houston, and national communities. **Rockefeller Fellows** are invited to join the internal Rice faculty Fellows as full members of this Seminar. There have been two two-year Seminars so far; Rockefeller Fellows have been available only to participate in the second of these, which, not entirely coincidentally has been more fully cross-cultural.

1987-89 was the first two year cycle of the Center Seminar. *Format.* The basic format of the Seminar that worked effectively was a presentation, followed by respondents from disciplines other than that of the presenter (or alternatively by persons representing different positions in a field of debate), before opening the floor to general discussion. Often an event with this format would be followed up by a more informal discussion meeting. Enough of a discourse emerged over the course of quite diverse topics that we had several spirited integrative and retrospective discussion sessions, pulling several Seminar topics together.

Topic. The umbrella topic was "**Moral Sensibilities in Historical and Cultural Context**". The Seminar began around the ideas provided by the work of Tom Haskell (History) probing the rise of a humanitarian consciousness, an expanded and differently arrayed ethical sense of responsibility, at the time of the rise of a world market system and the abolition of slavery. Sessions directly related to this historical period and the issues of the market, causality, responsibility, emancipation punctuated the two years, including the debate between David Brian Davis and Haskell; and a session the second year led by Orlando Patterson (Harvard). Other sessions focussed on a number of different philosophical accounts of ethics/morality: Heidegger was the focus of a spirited session led by intellectual historian Richard Wolin, with responses by philosophers Dennis Schmidt (SUNY, Binghamton) and Rebecca Comay (Toronto), revolving around the relation vs non-relation between Heidegger's politics and his philosophy, and more generally around the possible criteria for grounding ethics; another session, led by Agnes Heller (New School for Social Research) opened up the problematics of nihilism as not moral anarchy but the dangers and possibilities of ethical grounding in a post-Christian, post-traditional religious world; another philosophical perspective was offered by Jean-Francois Lyotard (Paris and University of California at Irvine) focussing on moral sensibilities in the late twentieth century (and the debate about postmodern conditions of knowledge); Robert Bernasconi led a session on the

post-Holocaust philosopher Emanuel Levinas's efforts to reconstruct ethics in terms of engagement with the "other" (other people, the traditional Judaic divinity as a trace felt only through concern for others); and a symposium of analytic philosophers debated "Reason or Culture: the Nature of Morality and the Possibility of Moral Progress" (Gilbert Harman of Princeton, Peter Railton of Michigan, and Simon Blackburn of Oxford). Barbara Harlow (Comparative Literature, University of Texas) provided a vigorous contemporary grounding for ethics in the literatures and discourses being generated by the large numbers of people coping with imprisonment under various sorts of authoritarian and military rule in the third world, with side reflections on the U.S.; Elizabeth Long (Sociology) provided another contemporary grounding for ethics in the ways reading groups in Houston register moral reflection; and Wes Morris (English) did an account of Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom.

Over the two year Seminar, there were fifteen public sessions. Fifteen blue book informal transcripts and summaries of these sessions were produced made available to anyone interested.

1989-91 was the second two year cycle of the Center Seminar. *Format.* In the first year, a series of reading and discussion sessions interspersed with public lectures worked out some general thematics around the *performative aspects of representation*. In the second term a more focussed format evolved of mini-conferences over two days to juxtapose African or Asian materials with European or American ones: two of these focussed on African philosophy and literature; one on Buddhism and deconstruction. There were also several demonstrations of Buddhist ritual, and extended discussions with two Buddhist monks, and a visit by the Dalai Lama is planned for early March. A second set of thematics was developed around *cognitive philosophical issues embedded in African, Asian and European philosophies, differentiated into their systematic professional forms and their everyday praxis forms*.

1989-90. Wendy Doniger [O'Flarety], the Mircea Eliade Professor of the History of Religions at Chicago kicked off the term with a discussion of the kinds of knowledge that efforts to understand other cultures' mythologies produces; and Alan Megill (history, Iowa) led a discussion about the nature of historiography. Rockefeller Fellow Dorrine Kondo presented an analysis of "M. Butterfly" as a register of post-colonial problematics constituting ethnicity, racism, gender-power relations, the psychology of dependency/desire/projection/exoticism/competence/power, Asian-American and women of color positionings in the U.S., and civilizational positionings of china and the West. Associate Dean of Architecture Alan Balfour presented the changing architectural conceptions of the Leipziger Platz in Berlin as a register of the ways in which architecture is a residue of unresolved conflicts in cultural change (rather than, say, a design for, or language of culture). And Humanities Lecturer and performance art director Johannes Birringer presented a performance and led a discussion about the performance, exploring ways of accessing, representing and articulating urban experience of a city such as Houston.

In the spring term, the performative aspect of representation continued as a theme with

presentations by (a) a group of eight Tibetan monks of a ritual, together with a follow up discussion on the epistemological issues raised by ritual performance, (b) **Rockefeller Fellow** John Ojo on knowledge encoded in lineage poems of Yoruba craftsmen, (c) **Rockefeller Fellow** Dorinne Kondo presented a paper on nostalgia, commodification, and Japanese identity in the fashion industry., and (d) Yoruba High Priest and former Chancellor of Ife University, Wande Abimila, of the cosmological, chant, proverbial, and divinational system of the Yoruba.

The second theme also began to develop as a counterpoint to the performative, namely the cognitive philosophical issues embedded in African, Asian, and European philosophies, differentiated into their systematic professional forms and their everyday praxis forms. This was made into a primary focus of attention at a two day conference framed around the Zairean and Duke University philosopher and novelist V.Y. Mudimbe's *Invention of Africa*, a book that surveys the development of professional philosophy in Africa, and its relations to the development of several generations of nationalist, anti-colonialist, and/or self-defining Africanist discourses. Explicitly at issue here was the development of a movement of "ethnophilosophy" which attempts to interrogate African linguistic structures, as well as semantics and other levels of cultural form. A Kenyan philosopher, D.A. Masolo was asked to present a formal critique of Mudimbe's book, knowing that Mudimbe would be present. Other invitees included Godfrey Okoth from the Brookings Institution and Uganda's Makerere University, Ivan Karp from the Smithsonian, Corrine Kratz (Smithsonian and University of Nairobi), Akoko Omwony from the Chicago Museum of Art, Ed Steinhart from Texas Tech., Professors Akalou, Opolot, and g. Maddox from Texas Southern University. The discussions stimulated the Asianists among the Fellows to plan a similar conference for the fall, drawing upon the experience with the Tibetan lamas who were on campus in January, and in preparation for the visit of Khetsun Sangpo, an eminent Tibetan scholar and ritualist from Kathmandu who will be resident for a month at Rice in the spring term.

1990-91. The focal event of the fall term was the conference on Buddhism and Deconstruction, organized by Anne Klein (Religious Studies), and focussing on the deconstructive nature of Buddhist scholarship, bringing Buddhist tradition into play with contemporary theories that interrogate rhetorical and representational forms. Invited outside participants included the Tibetan lama Khenbo Palden Sherab of New York, Bernard Faure and Lee Yearley (both of Stanford's Religious Studies Department), Janet Gyatso (Amherst), Luis Gomez and John Lopez (both of Michigan), Barbara Aziz (NYU), and Stan Mumford (College of Iowa); panel participants from Rice included faculty from history (Richard Smith), religious studies (Anne Klein), anthropology (Steve Tyler), and French Studies (Philip Wood). **Rockefeller Fellow** Stepania Pandolfo was extremely helpful from the audience in helping keep the tension between Buddhist studies and Deconstruction a mutually interrogative one. A potential volume is under consideration by the conferees, perhaps through the writing of papers, their circulation and a second follow up workshop next fall. In the meantime, the discussion will be continued by the Seminar Fellows through the month long visit of a Tibetan lama this spring, as well as a visit by the Dalai Lama. A second conference on African philosophy will also be held this spring, organized by Atieno Odhiambo and **Rockefeller fellow**

Peter Amuka. We hope to put together the results of this conference with that of last spring, and possibly also have some discussion of comparative issues that arise in both the Buddhist and African discussions. Among the participants in the Africa conference will be people from Northwestern's Center for African Studies, and we hope that this will be the start of an on-going relationship with that Center.

1991-92 will be the beginning of a new cycle. We are contemplating using this as a forum for directly thinking through the idea of a Cultural Studies graduate program: syllabus of readings, but more generally a series of workshops on issues such as those listed in the preceeding pages. We are still in the process of selecting Rockefeller Fellows for next year, but one possibly, given the extraordinary pool of applicants is a demonstration set of fellows with Rice faculty to form a workshop on world religions which would explore comparative issues of interpretation. This would be a nice pilot for the efforts to transform the religious studies department at Rice.

2. Center Workshops. The Center currently funds five faculty workshops. Two of these are an outgrowth of the earlier Rice Circle, a brief description of which is provided only for historical background, since it was one institutional ground out of which the Center and its intellectual vision itself evolved.

The Rice Circle was established in 1982-83. It was organized and run by the Anthropology Department with participation each year of two to three historians, two to three persons from English, two to three philosophers, a sociologist, someone from French, someone from Spanish, an ethnomusicologist, a visiting German scholar of modern Latin American literature, etc. (the composition varying slightly from year to year). Each year a topic was selected for discussion. The first year focussed on therapeutic discourses and their analogical implications for questions about rhetoric and representation in different academic disciplines including ethnography in anthropology, and critical discourse in literary theory. Contrasts were explored between oral face to face contexts and textualization of oral life worlds; between efforts to heal by making someone speak, mirroring that speech, deconstructing it and putting it back together in a different narrative, and efforts to evoke or create a reality for explanatory or scientific purposes; and the ethics of those procedures. The second year focussed on what in the current debates about postmodernism and/or critical writing could be relevant for research projects being pursued by Circle participants. The third year focussed on how the notion of "reason" is central to constructing such notions as "self" and "society". The fourth year the topic was theories of aesthetics: is there a profound privileging of the visual in Western theories of aesthetics and epistemologies, grounded in the structure of Indo-European language and in technologies of literacies, that contrasts for instance with the privileging of the sonic in a New Guinea society such as Kaluli; how have parts of

the sensorium been utilized, e.g., smell, in aesthetic and epistemological differential ways in medieval and modern France; the interconnection between aesthetics and politics; e.g., art as political critique, but also the politics of setting up aesthetic criteria. The fifth year, the topic was the ways scientific and technological thinking infiltrates and recasts humanistic discourses.

The Rice Circle served as a very successful forum, not only for discussion, but also for airing work in progress. A number of books were helped along in their genesis or process, including: George Marcus and Michael M.J. Fischer's *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences* (Chicago, 1986); James Clifford and George Marcus, ed., *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (California, 1986); Tullio Maranhao's *Therapeutic Discourse and Socratic Dialogue* (Wisconsin, 1986); Tullio Maranhao's edited volume, *The Interpretation of Dialogue* (Chicago, 1990); Stephen A. Tyler's *The Unspeakable: Discourse, Dialogue, and Rhetoric in the Postmodern World* (Wisconsin 1987); and Michael M.J. Fischer and Mehdi Abedi's *Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogues in Postmodernity and Tradition* (Wisconsin, 1990).

Currently the Center supports five workshops:

(a) **The Workshop on Postcolonial Discourses**, formed in 1989-90 as an outgrowth of the Rice Circle, is an effort to discuss the ways in which the literature on colonial and postcolonial discourses might be enhanced by comparative attention both to historical empires of earlier eras, and especially to ways in which the contemporary era is different from the colonial and immediate postcolonial eras. The effort is to engage active research projects of people at Rice and elsewhere in creating new tools of analysis. 1989-90 sessions included analyses of the use of visual imagery (photography) to reframe and alter understanding (using the work of John Berger, Edward Said and photographer Jean Mohr, and J.T.M. Mitchell); analyses of the double-sided ambi-valent, and psychologically figured, rhetoric of pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial discourses about the "other," being developed by Homi Bhabha and the group at Essex in critique of Edward Said and Foucault's less nuanced notions of power and rhetoric; analysis of architecture as registers of unresolved conflicts in culture change and thus registers for conflicted ideas about moral integration (using Alan Balfour's work on Berlin). There were presentations of current Rice research by Jule Taylor of biographies of Argentina's upper classes, by Alan Balfour in his Berlin material, and by Laura Brousseau on visual imagery. In the spring, the workshop hosted Scott Lash (Lancaster) on the sociology of postmodernity, Richard Handler (Virginia) on living history museums as a contemporary cultural and ideological production, and Michael Taussig (NYU) on violence and resistance in the Americas, and a second presentation on mimesis as a non-cognitive means of learning.

1990-91 sessions have included discussions led by Paul Rabinow (from Berkeley) on the social implications of the genome project, and on the social organization of modernity in France and the French colonial empire; and a one day conference on cultural constructions of the other in the

contact, conquest, post-conquest periods of European and Amerindian interaction in Mexico and the Caribbean, led by Peter Hulme (Sussex) and Pat Seed (History) as initiation of further discussions on the discursive practices of the Columbian Quincentenary celebrations, an opportunity to bring together the reanalyses of the conquest of America, the interplay between Aztec and Mayan and Spanish perspectives, the contrast between Spanish and English perspectives on the New World, and the contemporary productions of celebrations (and their contestations) of the events of "discovery" and conquest and the ways in which these productions function in today's world.

Rockefeller Fellows John Ojo, Dorrine Kondo, Stephania Pandolfo, and Peter Amuka have been regular participants in this workshop.

(b) **The Rice Feminist Reading Group (RFRG)** was founded under the initial guidance of Jane Gallop, the inaugural director of Women's Studies at Rice, and was intended as a discussion group for faculty interested in women's studies and feminist theory. It continues today under the new director of Women's Studies at Rice, Helen Longino, a philosopher of science. It has been a very active forum for bringing together faculty with diverse backgrounds and interests, and for bringing leading feminist scholars from around the country to Rice. It has provided a community for coordinating and synergistically supporting the teaching of Women's Studies across the humanities and social sciences. And it has been a forum for developing some systematic fields of inquiry: e.g., gender and science, involving not only issues of women and science, but also the ways in which knowledge gets socially constituted, modes of excluding some lines of inquiry and increasing the speedy dissemination of others, in the natural sciences as well as in the social sciences and humanities. **Rockefeller Fellow** Dorrine Kondo was a very active participant and constructive contributor during 1989-90.

(c) **The Ancient Studies Workshop** divides its activities in two functions: a traditional lecture format bringing outside scholars to Rice; and a discussion group which is a venue for thinking through ways in which the Mediterranean World is a venue for the development of cultural studies, comparative research and teaching. Substantively, given the new faculty at Rice, the latter is an exciting challenge and opportunity to integrate the Arabo-Berber-Islamic southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean (and the non-Arab and non-Arabic Middle Eastern worlds as well) with the Greco-Roman-Byzantine classical and early modern northern shores.

(d) **The Medieval Studies Workshop** led by Jane Chance sponsors diverse activities relating to the medieval world, and each year has mounted a conference bringing medievalists from around the country to Rice.

(e) **The Continental Philosophy Workshop**, formed in 1989-90 as one of two outgrowths of the Rice Circle, holds discussions on contemporary developments in European philosophy, focussing on the tension between Habermasian modernism and the various challenges of French postmodernism.

(f) **The Film and Media Workshop** is in its inaugural term this spring under the initial convenership of Thomas McEvily.

C. Rockefeller Fellows

Year One. Both John Ojo (head of the Fine Arts Department at Ife University, Nigeria), and Dorrine Kondo (who was in transition from Harvard to Pomona where she now runs a women's studies program with a stress on perspectives of women of color) were very active participants in the Center's activities, both in formal and informal ways.

Dorrine Kondo, an anthropologist who works on Japan, in particular, was a stimulating voice, prodding people to think beyond their normal horizons, an exercise that occasionally took some time to have its impact, but worked like a benevolent time-release capsule, both in the Center Seminar and the Feminist Reading Group; her contributions were more immediately at home in the Workshop on Postcolonial Discourses. The Center Seminar was convened under the broad rubric of "Rhetoric and Representation", and Dorrine had a hand in helping focus one of its major thematics around the performative aspects of representation with a powerful presentation and discussion of "M. Butterfly" as a register of post-colonial problematics constituting ethnicity, racism, gender-power relations, the psychology of dependency/exoticism/competence/power, Asian-American and women of color positionings in the U.S., and civilizational positionings of China and the West. By the end of the spring term, the Seminar, with explicit reference to her work, planned a fall conference on Buddhism and Deconstruction. Dorrine gave a second major formal presentation in the spring on her current research project, as well as sharing her inaugural lecture at Pomona, a spirited piece called "Women of Color and the Cultural Politics of Identity." She not only gave a talk in the anthropology department graduate student seminar, as she notes in her final report, but worked quite closely with several of our graduate students. She did several other talks around the country, went on two brief research trips bringing back material to share with us all, and served as a commentator on a major paper at the Society for Cultural Anthropology. In sum, I think the year was very productive for her, and she was certainly very useful for us in our effort to continue to build up an environment of cross-cultural, comparative, and interdisciplinary discussion at Rice.

John Ojo was also quite active and a regular participant in the Center Seminar, the Postcolonial Discourse Workshop, the anthropology Department brown bags and colloquia, and with Atieno-Odhiambo in the History Department. He made contacts outside the university, both in the Yoruba and wider African communities in Houston, notably consulting on a major show curated at the Houston Children's Museum on Yorubaland which then toured the States; and participated in

professional meetings such as the African Studies Association meetings. He gave a public lecture for the Center, and helped arrange the conference we held on African philosophy, bringing his former university chancellor and Yoruba high priest, W. Abimila. This conference served as a model and spur for the Asianists in the Seminar to do a seminar in the following term on Buddhism and Deconstruction.

Year Two. Both Peter Amuka (from the University of Nairobi) and Stephania Pandolfo (a recent Ph.D. from Princeton) have also been quite active in Center Activities. Amuka is helping put together the coming spring conference on African Translation which is a follow up to last spring's conference, and is about to make a first formal presentation to the Center Seminar on his own work on Luo oral literature. Stephania Pandolfo, who works the boundaries between anthropology and poetics in the local Arabic-Berber traditions of southern Morocco, and Amuka seemed to have, as we had hoped, a great deal to say and exchange with one another in the early part of the fall term, setting the groundwork for larger discussions on oral literatures and the rhetorics of representation such as are being explored by the Center's Seminar and the Workshop on Postcolonial Discourses. Pandolfo proved to be particularly useful in the conference on Buddhism and Deconstruction, bringing her expertise in the latter to bear. She has also been making preliminary contacts for the Center with scholars in Morocco, and think through the idea of engaging them in a workshop on visual figuration and the intractable that escapes efforts at linguistic capture. She has also made two presentations to the Department of Anthropology so far on her own work.

Year Three. We are currently in the process of selecting Fellows for the coming year. One possible combination that might shape up would be to select three quite remarkable candidates in Islamic, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian studies, and together with specialists in hermeneutics and interpretation on the Rice Faculty constitute a working group on world religions that might serve as a demonstration effect for thinking through the new appointments in Religious Studies. But there are also some other remarkable possibilities and candidates in this year's pool.

We received 97 applications this year: 23 from Africa, 30 from Asia, 35 from the Americas (U.S., Canada, and West Indies), 8 from Europe and 2 from Australia. By discipline 18 were in anthropology, 16 in literature, 14 in philosophy, 12 in history, 6 in religious studies, 6 in political science, 4 each in education, ethnomusicology, communications, and linguistics, 3 in economics, 2 in sociology/demography, 2 in archeology, and 1 each in art history, classics, and American Studies.

Years Four and Five if granted. The advertisement for persons with African and Asian culture expertise seems to be working well for us. While interdisciplinary and comparative issues seem always possible to stimulate, it is harder to address the imbalance in the faculty's expertise on Western examples, and having a couple of extra persons specifically designated to remind us of

this interest is a great help. It will particularly be so as we begin to think about a graduate program.

We would like to expand the impact of the Rockefeller Fellows by networking with them through complementary Centers elsewhere in the U.S., such as the Center for Psychosocial Studies in Chicago, the Center for Transnational Cultural Studies at Pennsylvania, the Center for Cultural Studies at Santa Cruz, and the Institute for Advanced African Studies at Northwestern. For this, we will have to find some additional travel funds; we have been funding visits for them to at least one professional meeting, and occasionally been able to help with research trips.



May 24, 1990

Department of Anthropology

Michael M. J. Fischer, Director
Center for Cultural Studies
Rice University
Houston, TX 77251

Dear Michael:

I am writing to report on my year's activities through the Center for Cultural Studies. The luxury of a year's free time, opportunities to consult and exchange ideas with scholars in the Department of Anthropology and through the Center for Cultural Studies, have been indispensable in allowing me to complete a number of projects and to make substantial progress in my work on the fashion industry.

First, while on the grant I was able to finish outstanding work on my book, Crafting Selves, published in April by the University of Chicago Press, and to complete two articles based on chapters in the book, for anthologies in the Japan studies field. I also completed an article on the play "M. Butterfly", which has been accepted by Cultural Critique. Second, I was able to take two research trips for fieldwork, interviewing and gathering of archival materials, one to New York in November, and the second to Paris in March, to attend the collections of pret-à-porter for key Japanese designers. I will also go on a third research trip in June to New York and to Princeton, to do more interviews and to use the Japanese archives at the Gest Library in Princeton. These trips have been indispensable in enabling me to gather materials and to make further contacts, laying the groundwork for an interview trip I will take to Tokyo in the summer. I should also say that the year off allowed me to seek funding sources for these trips--from the Northeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies, from the American Philosophical Society, from the Gest Library, and from the Pomona College MacArthur Research Fund. Finally, I have been able to outline my book manuscript, to complete an article for an anthology based on my fashion research which will also serve as a chapter for the fashion book, and to complete substantial research and writing for a second chapter. I have also undertaken a review for Comparative Studies in Society and History on postmodernism and Japan, which will constitute the basis for a third, theoretical chapter in the book. The results of the year's work has exceeded all my expectations.

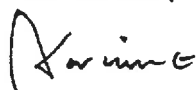
In addition to research activities, I had various speaking engagements during the year. At the Society for Cultural Anthropology Meetings on "The Making of Popular Culture", I acted as discussant for a plenary session, responding to Marilyn Ivy's paper on "Popular Theater". I was also discussant at the Association for Asian Studies annual meetings in Chicago, for a panel entitled "Gender and Work in Contemporary Japan." I gave an address, "Women of Color and the Cultural Politics of Identity," to a conference on Race, Ethnicity, Class and Gender in the Curriculum, at the Claremont Colleges. At California State Polytechnic, I spoke in their series on Gender, Race, and Imperialism on "European Imperialism and the Sexual Mythologizing of Asia." At Rice, I gave two talks; one was to the Anthropology Graduate Student Seminar, and concerned "the political stakes" in academic debate and in my work; the other was a lecture for the

Center for Cultural Studies, "The Aesthetics and Politics of Style in the Japanese Fashion Industry," in which I presented my current work on fashion.

Two journals requested that I act as referee for several articles: for The American Ethnologist and for Cultural Anthropology, where I am on the Editorial Board. I reviewed two articles for the former, six for the latter.

As you can see, it has been a busy, enormously productive year. The time away from teaching and the opportunity to interact with stimulating colleagues have made this an exceptionally exciting and fruitful period for me. Many thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation.

All the best,



Dorinne K. Kondo
MacArthur Associate Professor, Women's Studies and Anthropology
Pomona College
Rockefeller Fellow
Rice University

cc: Professor Atieno Odhiambo

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES FOR FELLOWSHIP YEAR BY J.R.O.OJO:1989/90
ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW AT THE CENTER FOR
CULTURAL STUDIES, RICE UNIVERSITY, HOUSTON TEXAS

I originally planned to bring together my findings on the social context of Yoruba Art, and revise my manuscript on Epa and related masquerades for publication. For theoretical and practical reasons, the plan had to be modified slightly and an entirely new project 'European attitudes to Nigerian art and culture' included.

My initial interaction with fellows of the Center for Cultural Studies and other faculty from various disciplines confirmed what I have always suspected - that I was slightly out of step with the latest theoretical developments in the study of culture, one of the main concerns of my research. Fortunately, Rice University is in the forefront of the most recent advances in the study and interpretation of culture and I have derived immense benefit from the interdisciplinary discussions on Rhetoric and Representation as well as the Seminar on Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse which encouraged me to revive the project on European attitudes to Nigerian art and culture up to 1900.

My participation in the various seminars and discussions enabled me to push my understanding of meaning and signification in the visual and plastic arts beyond Panofskian, Sasseurian and Barthian frame work in order to take into consideration recent thinking about meaning in the work of philosophers such as Heidegger, Derrida, Benjamin, Gadamer and Habermas.

On a more positive note, my work on the Context of Yoruba Art has yielded the following results:

The praise poem of Lagbayi the Olojowon, eponymous ancestor of Yoruba wood carvers, an aspect of the relationship between verbal and visual arts' stresses the importance of oral tradition, in this case, praise poems in the study of traditional African Art. Delivered as one of the papers in the Center for Cultural Studies Rockefeller Lecture series, the praise poem on which the paper is based is one of several which contain information about Yoruba social institutions. An abridged version of this paper will be sent to Africa, J. Int Afr. Inst. London.

The origin and significance of Yoruba beaded crowns' discusses Yoruba kings' crowns as symbols of divine authority, examines the significance of the motifs, and how this affirms the king's status as 'second in rank to the gods'. This paper, with 35 slides specially prepared for the purpose, will be delivered at the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution Washington on June 3 as part of the activities connected with the exhibition titled Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought currently touring the U.S.

'Yoruba Art' is a 5000 word general essay for the Africa volume of the Macmillan Dictionary of Art.

The next three papers each about 4000 to 5000 words, discuss the setting and usage of three types of objects: -Epa masks; Yoruba carved verandah posts; and Yoruba carved doors. They will be issued as special bulletins by the Barbier Mueller Museum, Geneva.

"European attitudes to Nigerian history and culture" was a project at the back of my mind but on which I have now collected substantial data because of encouragement at the Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse seminars, the availability of copious material in Fondren Library (which is not available in my home base) and the acceptance of my panel proposal on 'African Art through the eyes of explorers and missionaries' by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association during the Nov 1989 meeting of the African Studies Association. It has been forwarded to the vetting committee of the ASA for consideration for the Nov 1990 meeting (Theme: Ethics and Development) in Baltimore Maryland. The five papers in the panel proposal will examine European documents - narratives, reports, letters, engraved and photographic illustrations as records of African culture; and also as mirrors of European ideas and conventions about Africa.

Other activities not directly related to my tenure as fellow but relevant to my work include:

Acted in a purely advisory capacity and supplied exhibits for the Children's Museum of Houston exhibition titled Omokunle: an African village exhibit. Curated by Prof Atieno Odhiambo, it recreates in miniature for children, a Yoruba village.

Invited lecture in the Dept of Anthropology, Univ of Houston "Symbolism in African masquerading: religious, social and secular", outlines the various contexts of masquerading in Africa and the significance of masking in the various settings.

Invited lecture in the Art and Art History Dept of Rice University. "Issues in the study of traditional African Art" in the course on Approaches to Art History. discusses merits and demerits of the historical and sociological approaches to the study of traditional African Art, and identifies the sources of data for both approaches.

Identification of African Art objects with Museum Docents and the Curator of Sewall Gallery. In a follow up session, interested students selected pieces and were instructed in matching objects in the collection with those already published in order to collect information about such pieces.

From June 14 onwards, I will go through the collection of African Art with the Curator with a view to collaborating in producing a guide to the collection of African Art.

Apart from attendance at the 1989 ASA, I attended the Conference of Africanist Archaeologists at the Univ. of Florida, Gainesville in order to participate in the Symposium and Workshop on Art, Archaeology and the Art Market.

The intellectual environment provided by the Center for Cultural Studies has been very conducive to interdisciplinary research and discussion, the defects in my output for the year cannot be blamed on the center. However, in order to boost productivity of future fellows, it will be a good idea to make personal computers available especially to fellows who cannot afford one. This will save them the inconvenience of hassling with students in the computer laboratories.



Stefania Pandolfo
Department of Anthropology
and Center for Cultural Studies
Rice University
P.O. Box 1892
Houston, TX 77251

RICE

Department of Anthropology

Michael Fischer
Director
C.C.S.
Rice University
P.O. Box 1892
Houston, TX 77251

January 31, 1991

Dear Michael,

As I am aware that a decision is about to be made concerning the renewal of funding for future Rockefeller Fellows at the Center for Cultural Studies, I would like to recommend strongly the continuation of the program, on the basis of my experience as a Fellow during the current year, and my participation in the activities of the Center for Cultural Studies at Rice University.

My working project at the Center will culminate in a second book, which treats the relationship of readability and unreadability, interpretability and opacity, symbolization and the asymbolic read through a number of different domains. I address the issue ethnographically, through a body of (mostly oral) textual material on poetry, technology and traditional medicine.

At this point in the development of my project the Fellowship at the Center has offered me the unique opportunity to work at a research/writing project full time in an exciting and stimulating intellectual environment. Daily exchanges and discussions with the members of the Anthropology Department, faculty and graduate students, and with the members of the Center for Cultural Studies, which includes philosophers, religious scholars, literary critics and historians, have enriched my project immensely. For, although I choose to write in the ethnographic mode and locate my work within anthropology, the theoretical questions I ask are widely interdisciplinary; they spring from debates in literature and philosophy as much as in anthropology. A structure such as that of the Center of Cultural Studies, with formal and informal seminars involving scholars from different disciplines, is the ideal place for the development my work and my ideas. Conversely, I believe that my contribution has been of some interest for other scholars at Rice, and has in ways enriched their work. This exchange has taken place both within the formal frame of colloquia and seminars, and in the give-and-take of informal daily conversation.

As for the organized activities of the Center this year, the conference on Buddhism and Deconstruction has been a stimulating arena for addressing in a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary comparative context some issues that are central to my work. In the context of a similar interest in the development of cultural studies, I have been working towards the organization of a conference on the theme of figuration, uninterpretability and violence, involving scholars from different cultures and disciplines. During a research trip to Morocco and France in the Fall of 1990, I made contact with a number of Moroccan and French scholars--historians, literary critics and psychoanalysts--who accepted an invitation to this conference and are interested in participating to the activities of the Center in a more general sense. I believe that a continuing debate with non-Western and European scholars is central to the development of cultural studies in this country.

In sum, this experience has been crucial for the development of my intellectual identity and for the orientation of the future direction of my work. I hope, therefore, that other Fellows will be offered the same opportunity in years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Stefania Pandolfo', written in dark ink.

Stefania Pandolfo

TO: M.M.J. Fischer, Director, Center for Cultural Studies

FR: Peter Amuka, Rockefeller Fellow, Center for Cultural Studies — *P Amuka*

RE: Fellowship Activities and Experiences

DT: 12 February 1991

I am nearly six months into my Rockefeller Fellowship at the Center for Cultural Studies and deem this an appropriate stage to comment on my research program and the quality of the environment in which I have been conducting it.

I have been working on several interrelated papers or chapters with the objective of completing a publishable book manuscript on Luo oral art. I would like to have a publishable draft by the end of the fellowship, or at least by the end of the summer. But however fast that project is accomplished, I believe that some of my objectives have already been achieved. You must appreciate that for someone from Kenya, a fellowship such as this one provides not merely freedom from teaching and administrative duties in order to write, but above all it ~~is~~ provides access to a wealth of materials both through books and discussions that are not available at home, an opportunity to catch up with the always fast evolving developments in theory and research. The library facilities provided by Rice's Fondren Library and by the interlibrary loan system are, to put it modestly, excellent. I have been reading and learning much more than I could possibly put in a brief memo.

Again, another strong point for the Center: conferences. I met and listened to a Buddhist monk at the December 1990 conference at Rice for the first time. I never previously had the opportunity, and it was not just the monk, but a rich array of scholars on Buddhism from all over the United States were at my disposal in a small, intimate and accessible format. This was an opportunity to exchange ideas and benefit from exposure to conflicting, contrasting and coalescing world views. The experience was both culturally enriching and intellectually stimulating.

I would also like to take note of the weekly or fortnightly seminars and discussions on specific topics and texts. They keep me alert and have directed my attention to material I might otherwise have ignored. The quality of the exchanges in these discussions are of a high order and very stimulating, and I am particularly impressed by how receptive to new and unfamiliar ideas from other cultures the members of the faculty are. As a visiting fellow and non-American, I have been also impressed by how friendly and approachable people are. (New faces are very easily noticed at Rice, perhaps because it is a small campus, but most faculty seem eager to know faces they have not met before.)

Due to its small size, yet abundant research resources, Rice is an ideal location to write and study. The Center for Cultural Studies has a conducive intellectual atmosphere that easily caters for the various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences on a global scale. I am, indeed, grateful for the opportunity to benefit from the Center through a Rockefeller Fellowship.

Rice University, Center for Cultural Studies
Budget (Preliminary)
1992-94 Administrative and Stipend Costs

| | Rockefeller | Rice |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Fellow's stipends (4@\$30,000) | 120,000 | |
| Fellows' fringe benefits | 12,000 | 10,000 |
| Salaries: 1 mo. secy 1/10 aca. yr. M. Fischer | 4,000 | 14,000 |
| Advertising | 1,000 | |
| Printing | 1,000 | |
| Fellows' Travel (to & from Fellowship; professional Meetings; to other Rockefeller Centers) | 15,000 | |
| Fellows' organized workshop to invite outsiders to Rice | 2,000 | |
| Moving Expenses for Fellows | 3,000 | |
| Postage | 500 | |
| Telephone | 500 | |
| Supp. staff, supplies, comp., etc. | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| Indirect Costs (45%) | | 80,000 |
| TOTAL | 160,000 | 106,000 |