

2d Annual CLST Fellowship Workshop

3 Dec. 2014

Noon-2 p.m.

Purposes for this Workshop

- 1. To orient CLST students preparing to apply for the Cultural Studies Fellowship for 2015-2016.
- 2. To introduce any CLST student to general principles of applying for other interdisciplinary fellowships or grants in humanities and social science areas.

Who is Running the Workshop?

Ronald J. Zboray, Director of the Graduate Program for Cultural Studies, Professor of Communication, and Affiliate Faculty Member in Cultural Studies, Global Studies, and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies.

Recipient of 3 NEH full-year fellowships, most recently in 2012, Mellon Fellowship, & Schlesinger Library (Harvard U); directed 14 dissertations and is directing 10 in progress.

Dissertators received longterm funding from CLST (5); Pitt Mellon (6) AAUW (4); Smithsonian (1); Fulbright (1); Cambridge Mellon (1); Chinese Chancellor's (1); Ching-kuo Foundation (1)

What is the CLST Fellowship?

- CLST awards two fellowships for an entire academic year
- The fellowship stipend is based on the same scale as the TA/TF allocations
- Recipients must devote themselves full time to the project they propose in their fellowship application and thus cannot accept funding from other full-time fellowships or full- or part-time teaching assignments

What is the CLST Fellowship?

- Short-term funding from other sources that advances the project described in the CLST application (i.e., support for travel to collections) is acceptable and encouraged
- The Fellowship MAY NOT be rolled over to subsequent year to allow you to take any other full-year funding
- Eligibility: students have passed their doctoral comprehensive exams in Dietrich School graduate programs and who are formally enrolled in the CLST doctoral certificate program.

What is the CLST Fellowship?

- Fellowships usually go to students who have defended their prospectus or who are near to doing so
- Fellows are invited to present their work at the annual CLST Fellowship Showcase and fellows and applicants are invited to enroll in the CLST Dissertation Colloquium, supported by funds from the Humanities Center.

Why apply for a CLST Fellowship?

- Obviously, to have a chance to be released from teaching and other duties to focus on the dissertation
- Because your chances are MUCH better than external predoc fellowships; last year they were 1:4.5 For a Ford, they were 1:15; moreover, 1st and even 2nd alternates often receive the fellowship due to others declining the offer

Why apply for a CLST Fellowship?

- To provide an additional opportunity for fellowship funding outside of home departments that may sometimes nominate applications for other competitions more on a disciplinary basis
- To gain experience in conceptualizing dissertation projects for interdisciplinary audiences

Why apply for a CLST Fellowship?

- If awarded a fellowship, the line on the c.v.: dissertation-year funding adds cachet; and it establishes interdisciplinary “fundability” to external funders and grantors
- If not awarded a fellowship, applicants will bring their work to the attention of CLST fellowship committee members and applicants will receive individualized feedback from that committee on their applications with suggestions for improvement

When should I first apply for a CLST Fellowship?

- As soon as you have defended the prospectus or in the semester in which you will defend your prospectus; earlier than that your chances go down.
- If you win the fellowship, you set the stage for an external fellowship for dissertation completion, or for a Pitt Mellon; if you don't win, you can apply for the CLST Fellowship again.
- However, if your dissertation project is well defined and all of your recommenders know of it, you could apply as soon as you pass comps.

How can I prepare to apply before the prospectus?

- Present research papers (do not recycle titles) at both disciplinary *and* interdisciplinary conferences, like that of the Cultural Studies Association—take advantage of any opportunities for “top paper” acknowledgments—aim for national prestige venues over regionals or “graduate student conferences”
- “International” presentations are a plus, even if you are an Americanist
- Publish slices of your research

How can I prepare to apply before the prospectus?

- Make sure you have taken at least six crosslisted cultural studies courses by the time of application
- Make sure to develop a small pool of tenured or tenure-track faculty members, from both inside and outside your home department, who know your research and writing (and your dissertation goals) well enough to write you a strong and informed letter of support

How can I prepare to apply before the prospectus?

- Develop interdisciplinary dimensions in your graduate seminar papers
- Test out your ideas in interdisciplinary forums like the CLST common seminar
- Participate in CLST activities and be able to make a case that your work is “cultural studies”

How can know if my work is “Cultural Studies” enough?

- Only the fellowship committee determines that in the final analysis.
- To increase the chances they will deem it so, begin by asking if your work evinces some form of interdisciplinary cultural critique inflected with the left-liberal intellectual tradition.
- Your professors in CLST-crosslisted classes will have probably identified the cultural studies elements in your work or will have introduced you to cultural studies commonplaces (thinkers’ names or buzz phrases)

Who will be judging my CLST Fellowship application?

This year's CLST Fellowship Committee, elected by faculty members:

- Laura Brown (ANTH),
- Neil Doshi (FRIT),
- Randall Halle (GER),
- Adriana Helbig (MUSIC),
- Linda Penkower (RELST),
- Bruce Venarde (HIST, Committee Chair)
- Ronald J. Zboray, Director, ex-officio (COMMRC)

NOTE: Under CLST bylaws the committee composition changes each year, so, for better or worse, there is no “memory” of previous years’ applications.

Should I “psyche out” the committee?

- No, because on fellowship committees the whole is greater than the sum of the parts; don't fundamentally change what you want to do in order to suit your “take” on committee members, for that tends to backfire.
- However, it is good to have a feel for the audience members to whom you are writing, so do learn a bit about committee members and look at the CLST-crosslisted courses they have given on the [CLST website](#).

Applying for the CLST Fellowship (and other interdisciplinary ones)

Begin 6-8 Weeks Before the Deadline by Downloading All Information from Grantor

Why?

- Interdisciplinary applications tend to take longer to develop and they take more planning—avoid the temptation of blocking and moving unedited prospectus text that tends to be disciplinary
- You need time to read the downloaded material and develop a “battle plan” for reaching the deadline
- You should have a fairly finished draft of the application narrative to give your recommenders at the time you ask them

New CLST Fellowship Application

- Available on [CLST website](#)
- Jan. 16 4pm deadline, about 6 weeks

Note what you will need to do:

- **Applications must be assembled in a single pdf file and consist of, in this order:**
- 1. Cultural Studies Application form (this sheet, completed with requested information);
- 2. Statement of purpose (3 to 5 pages, double spaced, one side only, 12-point font)*
- 3. One writing sample, related to the dissertation topic, in English of 10 to 20 pages (one side only; 12 pt. font; more than 20 pages will not be accepted);
- 4. Current curriculum vitae;
- 5. List of up to 6 Cultural Studies courses completed (see <http://www.culturalstudies.pitt.edu/course-listingsprevious-semester> for course database);
- 6. Graduate transcripts in English.
- Three letters of recommendation must be e-mailed separately as a pdf by recommendation writers by the deadline.

“a single pdf file and consist of, in this order:”

CLST will accept only applications in this format

Make sure you know how to combine files into a single pdf and that you have kept file sizes small enough to be able to send them through email.

General rule: convert all individual documents into their own pdf; scan visually rich items like graduate transcripts into pdf formats

When all pdfs have been completed assemble them in the prescribed order in Adobe Acrobat (if you do not have this program yourself, check with your graduate secretaries).

1. Cultural Studies Application form

The title should be catchy yet descriptive of your full dissertation project, even though you may be writing for support of a part of it

NOTE: count from the year after you received MA

Title of CLST Fellowship Project:		
Name		
Last:	First:	Middle Initial:
Present Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Permanent Address:		
City	State/Country:	Postal Code:
Citizenship:		Home Dept.:
Email address:	Years of PhD study completed at Pitt as of May 2014:	

2. Statement of purpose

- Pay strict attention to the length and format requirements: (3 to 5 pages, double spaced, one side only, 12-point font)– 5 pages is about 1,500 words
- Don't eliminate margins; number your pages (except for page 1)
- Repeat your title exactly as on the application form, as well as your name

Content of Statement of Purpose

* The statement of purpose should include a paragraph that situates the student's work in two respects: across disciplines and within the diversity of cultural studies. The statement should also: 1) establish the significance of the planned work for the field of cultural studies and the applicant's home discipline; 2) specify the scope of the objects of study and methods the applicant will employ in studying them; 3) identify the requisite skills, background, and knowledge the applicant has to accomplish the work; 4) demonstrate the viability of both the dissertation and the work plan for the fellowship year; and 5) present well-formed plans for disseminating the results of the dissertation work. *N.B. Students who will use the fellowship to pursue research outside Pittsburgh must indicate where they would be studying and why.* Applicants should keep in mind that the writing sample and statement of purpose will be read by a committee of informed non-specialists from as many as seven disciplines. Applicants should thus avoid discipline-specific jargon, and not assume committee members' prior knowledge of technical issues or theoretical concepts.

Problem-shoot your project

- Before drafting the narrative, soberly think through some of the rhetorical challenges you will face and come up with some potential answers
- Can you adequately answer the question of “SO WHAT?” that an interdisciplinary reader might ask?
- What weaknesses do you have to address and what strengths do you have to highlight, and what are your strategies for doing so?
- What information do interdisciplinary readers need to know that disciplinary ones might take for granted?

Design Your Pages

- Decide what elements of the guidelines you need to accomplish on which of the pages.
- The first page is most important because by the end of it, the reader should basically know what the project is about, have an inkling into its significance, and have gotten sufficiently oriented to the topic.

A Sample First Page

Communicating Plots: Rituals of Remembrance at America's Overseas Military Cemeteries

Following the First World War, the task of memorializing fallen soldiers was far more problematic for the U.S. than for most other combatants. The nation had lost 116,516 soldiers—too many to be shipped back for interment in the U.S.—in defense of territory that was not its own, where threats to the American homeland and its interests were not as obvious, direct, or imminent as for European belligerents. Following armistice, public doubts over the costs paid through casualties of conscripted U.S. citizens became common and eventually led to Congressional investigations of wartime profiteers—the so-called “merchants of death.” Moreover, the wartime rhetoric of preserving Western democracy against the autocratic Hun revealed lingering domestic contradictions. For example, African-Americans who had bravely served their country returned home to find that any measures of social equality they had attained in Europe meant little in the United States, with its continuing Jim Crow segregation and increasing racial violence. In light of soldiers' bodies still lying in haphazard, makeshift graves in battlefields throughout Europe, for what, and for whom, had they died in what seemed strictly a European affair?

In 1923 Congress established the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to design, construct, and maintain uniform, monumental overseas cemeteries to link those bodies symbolically back to U.S. soil, and the national purpose rooted there. The ABMC over the following decade built eight military cemeteries in France, England, and Belgium on or near battlefields. These sites helped reconceptualize the relationship between body and nation, shifting emphasis away from physical remains to ideological meanings, from how individuals died horribly to why the collective sacrifice was made honorably, and how it should be remembered patriotically. The ABMC thus attempted to assuage public concerns over the war by sacralizing these cemeteries as, above all, *American* sites that, not coincidentally, expressed the nation's emerging prominent role on the world's stage. Tragically, that international role led to a future and even greater exigency following the Second World War, when the ABMC built a new series of far-flung overseas cemeteries, from the Philippines and to Tunisia in the shadows of a truly global war. The new cemeteries would at once build upon and deviate from the style and themes of the older sites in order to articulate remembrance of soldiers who died in a total war that saw death camps, urban carpet-bombing, and atomic warfare.

My dissertation-in-progress brings forth, through archival research and oral history interviews, the voices of the many stakeholders involved in the First World War cemeteries' foundation, those who later negotiated a new set of arrangements for the disposition of World War II bodies, and, ultimately those who continue the rituals of remembrance at these sites down to the present day, when there are twenty-two cemeteries, free and open 365 days per year and admired by millions of visitors annually.

The 2nd Page: Sources and Theories

As I have sifted through scholarly research materials, trade publications, Libeskind's own statements about the museum, and commentary on the rapid changes taking place in Berlin since the mid-1980s, I have become convinced that the design of the Jewish Museum Berlin, its current use, and its curatorial decisions are a product of negotiating different public interests. Its symbolism has been continually reinterpreted by Libeskind and others to fit the needs of certain interest groups at specific moments in time. The process of German reunification, the economic stresses of re-linking infrastructure in a divided city, the politics of national identity formation, and the opinions of the international community all play a part in influencing the trajectory of the museum project. Building upon the work of Gerard Hauser, Alexander Kluge and Oskar Negt and providing a contrasting case study to the relatively homogenous public sphere theorized by Jürgen Habermas, several distinct publics have advanced their interests in the Jewish Museum Berlin project through the circulation of scholarly articles, newsprint, letters, internal memos, and book publications, and responses to those interests can be found in the museum design, use, and curation. As such, a history of the project's development ought to provide some insights not only into the rapidly changing cultural landscape of Berlin, but also ought to offer insights into how publics make their interests salient and timely within a relatively unstable social, political and economic climate.

The 3rd Page: Explicit CLST Statement

Within the context of Cultural Studies, a sustained study of the design and reception of the Jewish Museum Berlin builds upon an already large body of scholarship devoted to the study of culture. From a very traditional frame of reference, the design of this dissertation project builds a bridge between the study of high and popular culture as well as the distinction between the normative and the anthropological senses of the term. In the former dilemma, a unique object of sustained reflection and human intellectual development (Libeskind's avant-garde design) is subject to the deliberative inclinations of both elite and popular audiences and must take both seriously. For the latter, at issue in the symbolism of the architecture and the displays are both the proper factual representation between Jewish and German culture, along with concerns about the cultivation of an educated citizenry. As Tony Bennett's landmark study early museums demonstrates, historical museums cultivate human beings and proscribe proper behavior while organizing displays in order to provide knowledge of a cultures traditions, rituals, and ways of life. In a more contemporary sense of the field, if one takes seriously Stuart Hall's argument that the meaning of culturally significant material is reducible neither to the encoding of a particular message nor to its interpretation by an audience, then the communicative processes of negotiating between production and reception of valued objects provide a way to understand how a society, often heterogeneous in its composition, presents itself as a coherent "culture." In essence, Cultural Studies does not correspond to a subset of objects of inquiry, but instead is constituted through public deliberation about its definition, proper limits, and future trajectory. In advancing their interests to particular audiences and discussing the significance of the Jewish Museum Berlin, the different publics identified by my dissertation research are working to constitute a particular version of German and/or Jewish culture.

Pages 4-5: Details, What you Will Do, What chapters? What have you accomplished? What equips you?

The opportunity to spend a year on fellowship would aid me in completing my dissertation by freeing me from teaching and therefore affording me time to do fieldwork in Detroit. The Cultural Studies Fellowship would allow me to conduct on-the-ground oral history interviews that by their very nature snowball into other potential leads based on names current narrators provide on which I can then follow up, critically, in the spaces—from homes to studios, to highways and streets—of Detroit's post-Motown landscape. During this time I will also be able to expand my archive of materials, including various visual and sonic archives, including books, newspapers, magazines, flyers, posters, photographs, and sound recordings, by finishing research begun this previous December as the 2009 Travel Fellow for the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan, as well as gathering related materials at the Reuther Library at Wayne State University, and the Burton Historical and Hackley Collections at the Detroit Public Library. I am well prepared to finish my dissertation, the prospectus of which I successfully defended in April 2009, in a timely fashion. Chapter 1 on the 1970s dialogue between jazz musicians and disco DJs will be completed this spring semester. The second chapter, an exploration of the African American youth dance scene that emerged in the late 1970s builds on a book chapter I already published in an edited volume by Greenwood and should be completed this summer. The third chapter on Detroit's rich dance radio traditions and its spill over into recording studios and record companies will be completed in fall 2010. The fourth and final chapter of my dissertation on how rave participants negotiated a prior communal tradition tracing back to the 1970s will be my focus for the following spring allowing me time to write my conclusion and defend my dissertation by August 2011.

The Textual Problem of Establishing Interdisciplinarity

It is weaker to claim interdisciplinarity explicitly (I will use so-and-so's work from this discipline and so-and-so's from another) than to demonstrate it implicitly through your writing in the narrative (and writing sample).

The burden is show how interdisciplinarity is more than an interpretive "wrapper," but rather that it materially enriches and informs the way you handle your source materials

This embedded interdisciplinarity can be signaled through quick perspectival shifts in a paragraph; or "tensions" through opposition

Other writing tips

Don't be afraid of short sentences

Structure your paragraphs well with internal forward-motion

Avoid jargon and field-specific technical terms

Avoid repeating the same words or phrases

Always give the reader some tidbit, a gift, to take away, something they may not have known before or that will stick in their minds—an opening vignette sometimes does this

VET YOUR NARRATIVE!!!!

- Your advisor is probably your best first reader for the draft narrative.
- Try to have one “lay” reader, preferably not in your home department, read a late-stage narrative.

Can you use footnotes?

- Yes, but do not overdo them
- Footnotes are preferred over endnotes
- Use them to cite sources, with little or no discursive additions
- Be sure footnotes conform to a standard style sheet, MLA, Chicago (Turabian), APA, etc.
- Be sure they are internally consistent
- Check and double check names and titles for spelling—at least 1 out of every 10 unchecked citations has an error
- Do not use a form with bibliography and in-text citations because the bib chews up space and in-text citations are hard to read for people not used to them

3. One writing sample

...Related to the dissertation topic, in English of 10 to 20 pages (one side only; 12 pt. font; more than 20 pages will not be accepted);

1. The sample is your chance to reinforce the message in your narrative by demonstrating how it works on the page, so it is best that it be directly related to your dissertation project
2. A published piece is probably better than one unpublished, but that is rare
3. The quality of the writing is judged, especially for its depth of critical/analytical insight, so avoid submitting purely descriptive or narrative excerpts.
4. If the piece is taken from the middle of a chapter, insert a paragraph in the beginning orienting the reader

4. Current curriculum vitae;

- Make sure it is in true c.v. and not resume form
- List all fellowships and awards, with amounts if you know them
- List all conference papers in either ascending or descending chronological order
- Highlight any publications but be sure to sequester away from them any pieces you have submitted—use “forthcoming” only when you have received proofs.

5. List of up to 6 Cultural Studies courses completed

Check the [CLST website](#) for course details

The purpose of this is to make sure that the applicant has been making progress in the program and to give the committee an idea of the applicant's CLST coursework background.

6. Graduate transcripts in English

Copies are acceptable—be sure that if something seems offputting in the transcript you address the issue in the narrative—for example a gap in coursework might be explained by a medical leave of absence

3 Recommendations

These should be from tenured or tenured-track faculty members with whom you have taken course or who serve on your dissertation committee.

Your dissertation advisor should write one of them—if not, be sure to explain why not in the narrative

Try to have at least one letter from outside your home department

Try to have at least two of the letters from [CLST faculty](#)

Try to supply each recommender with a copy of your narrative and an updated cv

Be sure that the writer knows your work well and do not think that a “big name” writing a tepid or generic endorsement is better

Emphasize to recommenders that they need to send their letter electronically as an attachment to the CLST Program Administrator—it would help if the attachment contains text beneath letterhead.

After Submission

- The committee meets in late January or early February
- The goal is a ranked list, a subset that can encompass as many as half the applications in the pool
- Within 24 hours of the committee meeting the two top ranked applicants are informed
- Within 72 hours, all ranked members are informed of their specific place in the rankings
- Within a week all other applicants are informed of the outcome of the competition.
- NOTE: In previous years it was common that people ranked in the high-middle of the list received the fellowship, due to awardees declining

Negotiating funding sources I

You may have to choose between the CLST fellowship and other funding options

You may not know you may be awarded other funding; external fellowship announcements tend to come out from March to June

Virtually all fellowships would require that you decline the CLST

If you get an external fellowship and you are awarded a Pitt-Mellon, the Pitt-Mellon can be rolled over to the subsequent year UNLESS the university has agreed to cut off funding as a condition of taking the external fellowship.

As an internal fellowship, the Pitt-Mellon can not be rolled over to let you take the CLST, or vice versa.

Negotiating funding sources II

- CLST will designate ranked alternates who would receive the funding should it become necessary to resign the fellowship in the March-June external fellowship offer season
- After June 30, CLST Fellowship acceptances should be viewed as final, barring emergencies.

Negotiating funding sources III

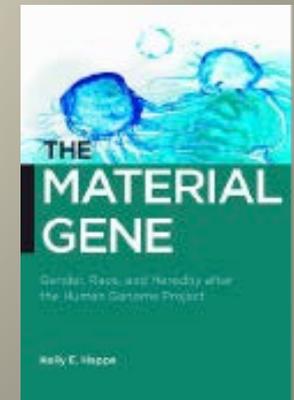
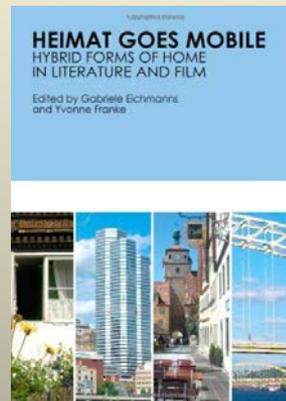
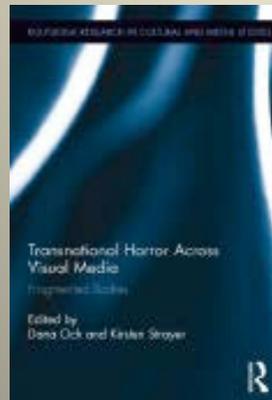
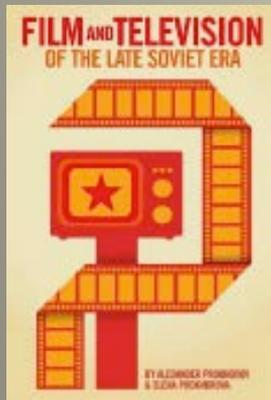
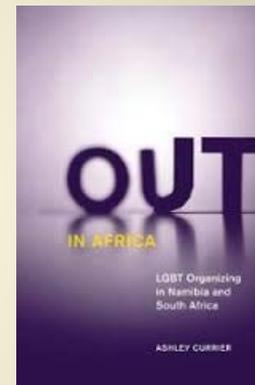
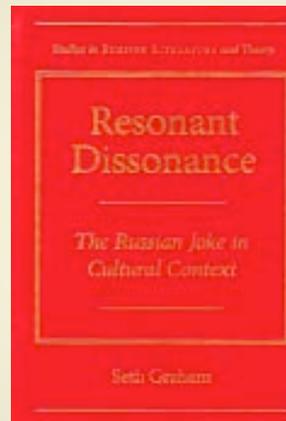
- In most cases, you should take an external fellowship over an internal because it suggests your ability to win national or international competitions.
- An internal fellowship is usually better than teaching at a home university, even if teaching might provide experience or more money
- An internal fellowship is usually better than an external nontenure-track position, but usually not a tenure-track one
- An internal merit-based fellowship like CLST's is usually better than a needs-based one, even one in which merit plays a role

Ethics

- Internal fellowships are given in the trust that they will be used for the purposes applied for, to advance work on the dissertation and shorten the time to degree
- Don't let a job search or predoc/postdoc fellowship hunt swallow precious funded research-and-writing time on the fellowship—try to sequester such initiatives to “spare time” or the “crunch time” when your discipline does the bulk of its hiring.
- **COLD HARD FACT:** You may never get another full “year off” for research and writing again, especially if you land a teaching-intensive job—even if you get a research-intensive position, full-year funding may come only once a decade.

Long term advantages of the CLST Fellowship

Former CLST Fellowship alumni have a sterling record of post-PhD publications that can be viewed on the website. Here are a few from 2000-13:



GOOD LUCK!!!

- If you have any questions, contact
- Ron Zboray
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- 412-624-6969