

DANA

The Dana Interviewer Class of 2010

Interviews by
First year Dana students:

FYS "Alice and Beyond" with Dr. Rosenwasser
And
FYS "Representing the Age of Revolution" with
Dr. Cragin



The Dana Interviewer

Featuring the Class of 2010

The Dana Scholars Program, made possible by the Charles A. Dana Foundation, acknowledges students who display academic potential, good character, integrity, and leadership ability through contributions both inside and outside of the classroom. Each summer, Muhlenberg College awards about thirty high school seniors with this honor, one of the most prestigious honors that the College offers.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.muhlenberg.edu/depts.interdis/dana/index.html>

Editors

Jessica Walch '10

and

Jillian Bevacqua '11

Dana Faculty Committee

Director:

Dr. Mohsin Hashim

Forum Director:

Dr. Jack Gambino

Faculty Advisory Committee:

Dr. Jim Bloom

Dr. Janine Chi

Dr. Linda McGuire

Dr. Mohsin Hashim

By Tina Chou

"The best thing to do is to stay out of the way, but to always be there," Dr. Mohsin Hashim explained in an open and supportive manner about his approach to directing the Dana program. The core of the Dana program is to nurture students of different disciplines. It supports exploration and inquiry to form an integrated education for each of its members. According to Dr. Hashim, who has been the director of the program since 2005, the Dana program is comprised of "complex identities" who are "intellectually curious." Their passion for learning is evident across campus, not only within the classroom, but in the studio, social gatherings, and club activities as well. Dr. Hashim emphasizes that being a Dana is not about the title, but the personality and individual academic career of each student, as well as his or her success after Muhlenberg.

Dr. Hashim's own upbringing and education are representative of the well-rounded intellectual curiosity that lies within the program. As the son of a Bangladeshi diplomat, he "grew up all over the world." He spent time in France, Burma, U.K., and Russia, before arriving in the United States. He received his Bachelors and Masters degrees at the Moscow State University, and his Ph.D. in the United States. His passion for education was instilled in him by his worldly experience, as well as his father's career. He applies these values to his own career as a professor, as well as to the Dana program.

Dr. Hashim is a professor of comparative politics and international relations specializing in post-Soviet Russia. He is also interested in political economy and globalization. However, his passion for teaching extends beyond his particular discipline, which is why he is such a strong leader for the Dana program. He finds that this opportunity is "inspiring, humbling, and challenging...[and has] formed so many great relationships." The flexibility of the program makes it strong and rewarding, although there are a few improvements he is looking into devising. He feels the program could benefit from having a mission statement. This would better provide a sense of unity across the Dana community. He suggested exploring ways to make "the capstone experience more meaningful for all Dana seniors." As a whole, he feels that the success of the program is difficult to measure, but it can be seen through Dana students' contributions to intellectual and community life on campus and beyond. His support and encouragement help to create not only intelligent Dana students, but inspiring and engaging people and professionals.

Dr. Giacomo Gambino

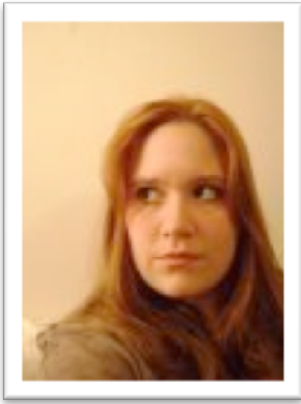
By Jessica Epstein

Dr. Giacomo Gambino first began his involvement in the Dana program in the late 1990s when he taught several First Year Seminars. He went on to act as a mentor for many individual Dana research projects, but had never led a Dana forum until last year, when he was invited to do so by Dr. Hashim. This year, he again accepted the responsibility of running the forum and has thoroughly enjoyed working with the "bright, motivated, and curious students" who contribute their many eclectic interests and talents. This year's forum is centered on the Center for Ethics theme 'Ethics of Space, Power of Place,' with a concentration on 'Urban Space in Modern Times.' This forum topic lies close to Dr. Gambino's heart, as he was raised in Newark, New Jersey and is a great resource to the students as an authority on the "national tragedy" of urban decay. The forum is a full-year experience for senior Dana scholars that begins with a seminar comprised of discussions and assigned readings about the subject matter. For the second component of the forum, students divide into groups of three or four to conduct collaborative research under the supervision of a faculty advisor. At the end of the year, all of their hard work culminates in a comprehensive presentation of their discoveries. Throughout this process, Dr. Gambino is able to bear witness to the growth and development of the students, even though he only knew a handful of them before the forum.

One of the principle goals of the forum is to reunite the Dana scholars towards the end of their college experience and to further facilitate bonding between the two sections by fostering a sense of common identity among them. Dr. Gambino also considers this a wonderful opportunity for senior Danas because they are assigned to research a topic that is not necessarily directly from their academic areas of specialty. The theme, however, is always broad enough to allow students from all majors to contribute their knowledge, which challenges them to think critically and relate their major and personal interests to the topic. Overall, working with the senior Danas has proven to be a rewarding experience for Dr. Gambino and he looks forward to other professors having the same opportunities to work with future scholars.

Amber Gray

By Adam Downer



Though I've hardly been initiated into the Dana Program myself, I was given the opportunity to glimpse into my potential future. Last Monday evening, I had the pleasure of interviewing Amber Gray, a senior here at Muhlenberg and a theatre major. Gray has truly enjoyed her experience in the Dana program. Her first year seminar was called Other Bodies. Taught by Jeremy Teissère, the Other Bodies seminar dealt with the ethics of cancer and conjoined twins. Gray enjoyed it immensely (it took no prompting for her to inform me it was her favorite class of her first year), finding it thought-provoking. She considers it the best part of the Dana program, which is interesting. After all, with four years participation in the Dana program, the best part happens in the first semester?

Of course, Gray was not suggesting that the Dana program was a disappointment the other three years of college. She had a wonderful mentorship under Beth Schachter, who helped Gray develop a play adapted from a children's book. Unfortunately, the play was never performed, but Gray still found it an important experience. Her internship was equally as rewarding, helping with set building and designs at the Civic Theater.

But Gray was critical about certain aspects of the Dana program. For example, she did not like how summer internships were excluded from meeting the internship requirements of the Dana program unless the school is paid a fee. She also dislikes how, unlike the RJ Fellows or Muhlenberg Scholars, the Dana program is less community based and focused mainly on the internship and fellowship requirements. After the first year seminar, the Dana program sort of becomes simply a name until the mentorship and internship requirements are met in the junior and senior years. Gray suggests that the remedy for this must come from the students- perhaps a couple more social events involving the Dana program.

This type of reformist attitude seems to be typical of Dana students; Gray's ideas for improvement are something many Dana scholars in my FYS share. Though the program is still forming, Gray believes there is room for growth, and as a student in the program now, I cannot wait to see how it develops.

Meghan Wilson

By Matthew Fitzsimmons

Meghan Wilson is a senior Dana Scholar here at Muhlenberg College. She has dedicated her time to two quite different and diverse majors: neuroscience and music. Though she has come a long way, her journey as a Dana Scholar started as all Dana Scholar's journeys begin, with her First Year Seminar. She was in the seminar Other Bodies. In this class they explored the norms of the human body and then began to explore the abnormalities of "other" bodies, like conjoined twins. They eventually began to delve into plastic surgery, a common topic of interest in today's culture. This class got her to think critically about the society in which she had been living in as well as the one in which she would continue to live in at and after Muhlenberg. Meghan has put herself on the pre-med track here at Muhlenberg. Being a Dana has helped her with this because of the mandatory internship and mentorship. She made it a point to stay in touch with the other Danas through the use of Facebook and by simply saying, "Hi" to them when she sees them. She is also an EMT and a head tutor. Meghan Wilson has made the most of her time here at Muhlenberg and has made an impact at the school.



Christopher Alvaro

By Genna Soslow



Chris Alvaro, now a senior here at Muhlenberg, is a Bio/Chemistry major. He says that the Dana program really helped him along the way as well as preparing him for what will come next after Muhlenberg. Right now Chris is busy applying to grad schools in which he hopes to pursue a PhD in a Molecular Biology program. He then wants to take that knowledge and potentially become a professor at another liberal arts college. He said that the things that really helped him prepare for the real world, in respect to the Dana program, were the ways that the mentorships, internships, and research projects helped him find ways to learn outside the classroom. He also likes the fact that all of the opportunities that the Dana project had to offer have helped him become comfortable with being an independent scholar. Some of the internships, research opportunities, and other numerous academic prospects Chris did with the Dana program were an internship at Sacred Heart Hospital and research on

molecular genetics. He plans on doing his senior Dana project on a concept of something to do with the body in space. In addition to all of this hard work, he is also involved in the theater program, the multicultural aspects of Muhlenberg, and is co-president of the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA).

Chris's favorite thing about Muhlenberg as a whole, and one of the reasons he came here, is the strength in academics and the ability to be able to do different things such as both science and theater. Something he does wish the program had is more cohesion throughout the four years. He said that he wished there were more events or dinners or mini trips to get to spend time with *all* the Dana scholars on the program with him (not just those in his grade). But something that he thought was really great with the Dana program was the fact that he became close with a lot of professors through the mentorships and internships and is not sure he would have done that if it weren't for the Dana Scholars program. As his final insight for our new Dana scholars, Chris says, "Don't be afraid to take risks and fail. Learn from every experience and take advantage of this safe environment; this is the place to do it."

Emily Morse

By Anne Bertolet

As a senior Dana student, Emily Morse has almost four years of college experience to share. Between fulfilling her academic requirements as a psychology major and anthropology minor and her extracurricular responsibilities as 2010 Class Council Secretary and a Delta Zeta sister, she has found a good balance in her college career. After her four years at Muhlenberg, she reflected upon one class that unites Dana students: the first-year seminar. Emily's seminar, *Boundaries and Belonging*, she remembers, was "challenging" and "a lot for a first year student," but she also remembers it as a "gathering of a diverse group." For Emily, this was the most significant part about being a Dana Scholar. She was able to meet with peers who not only have similar intellectual standards, but are also a diverse group of students. In one class, there can be individuals who come from many different geographic areas, but who also have different interests in their academic career. As Dana Scholars, the variation is motivating and the discussion-based class allows Danas to glimpse these other worlds that they may not find in their every day classes while trying to fulfill their



own academic requirements. To Emily, diversity is an important part of her college experience and it should not be tossed aside. Her advice to students is to take advantage of the diversity requirement. She says, "The D requirement is something that many students here at Muhlenberg just want to take to get it over it, but there are so many opportunities to explore something new." What class does Emily suggest taking that she found worthwhile? "Cultural Anthropology with Dr. Kovats-Bernat" is one of her favorites and allows students to explore diversity of other cultures. No matter which classes one takes here at Muhlenberg, it is important to remember that the Dana program is a way to interact with a diverse group of individuals.

Marisa Pereira

By Chelsea Majid



Marisa Pereira is a biology major and Spanish minor in the 3-4 Penn Dental program. Currently, she is in her first year of dental school. When asked what she had to do differently from students who would be at Muhlenberg for all four years, she said, "I had to complete the same requirements as everyone else, just in less time!" She spent her mentorship in Dr. Edwards' lab working on a part of Dr. Niesenbaum's Spicebush Project, which helped to improve her lab skills, and the summer research was a great experience without having to worry about classes in addition to mentorship work. Last spring, she completed her internship at the Lehigh Valley Hospital as a Research Scholar in the Department of Dental Medicine. "Conversing with the practicing dentists, residents, and staff at LVH really solidified my decision to attend dental school," Marisa said when asked about what she learned from her internship experience.

But the 3-4 Penn Dental program and Muhlenberg's strong science departments were not the only reasons why Marisa chose Muhlenberg. As a student with a passion for the performing arts, she liked that Muhlenberg encouraged students to pursue both the arts and sciences. She took advantage of the study abroad opportunities and spent a semester in Spain. Outside of the classroom, Marisa was a part of The Girls Next Door, Campus Delegate Representatives, intramural soccer, and was an admissions tour guide, Spanish tutor, and multicultural ambassador. As if that wasn't enough, she enjoys dancing, singing, running, and cooking in her spare time. The Dana program is something that helped Marisa to challenge herself to learn beyond the normal limits, which was clearly accomplished during her time at Muhlenberg. Marisa hopes to specialize after completing dental school, and to continue to learn as the Dana program taught her to do.

Jessica Walch

By Jaclyn Durkin

At the beginning of her Muhlenberg career, Jessica Walch anticipated being a Theatre and French double major. As the years progressed, she changed her plans; she is now a double major in Music, a long-time passion of hers, and Media & Communications, which she views as a growing field of opportunity. As a Dana Scholar, she has had the chance to participate in rigorous and rewarding classes, saying “when you are actively in [the Dana Program], it pushes you to places you never would have gone.” For Jessica, these places included one of her internships, where she spent a summer at Cherry Lane Music in New York City. Through this internship, she was able to learn about the music business, make valuable contacts in the industry, and take in the rich atmosphere.

Jessica also worked to gain experience outside of her areas of study. Although she ultimately chose not to major in French, she studied abroad in Rennes, France for a semester. “I wanted to do something new and refreshing,” she says of her semester abroad, and would tell anyone that it was one of the most rewarding experiences she has had. She lived with a host family, which was very challenging but also very rewarding. Through this experience she was able to hone her French skills while learning about how the French live.

Back on campus, Jessica participates in many extracurricular activities, including the all-Broadway a capella group, Noteworthy, and College Choir. Amazingly, she still has time to participate in the Muhlenberg Theatre Association, further demonstrating her artistic side. “I’m simply trying to take everything I can out of my time here,” says Jessica, as she acknowledges that she has been “challenged in the best possible way.” When asked about future plans, she simply says that she plans on finding a job she enjoys and then attending graduate school when she really knows what she wants to do for a career.



Kelly Butler

By Liz Fonseca



Kelly Butler of Langhorne, PA entered Muhlenberg with her heart already set on studying both biology and environmental science. As a freshman, Kelly took part in the seminar, “Other Bodies”, taught by Dr. Jeremy Teissère. The class, which started her on her scientific path in college, examined how extraordinary bodies (often referred to as “ugly” or “freakish”) are examined in society. Kelly found the seminar very interesting and credits the Dana Scholars Program with motivating her to actively pursue internships and research opportunities. She completed her required internship in the education department of the Lehigh Valley Zoo. Not only did she participate in programs located at the zoo, but she also went to events like birthday parties and school presentations to display various animals. Through such events, she hoped to encourage the children to become interested in wildlife from the new things that they learned.

Kelly also did research with environmental science professor Dr. Jason Kelsey, which focused on pesticides in soil. She was looking for the answer to the question of how different organisms take up the compounds DDE and PCBS, and how much gets incorporated into their tissues. Butler stays involved on campus as a learning assistant for Biology I, while last year she held the position for Organic Chemistry. Now, she is focused on and excited about the project that she is doing as part of the Dana Program’s capstone. She and her group have decided to explore how religious scripture mandates the ownership of space and the morality of religious communities owning spaces. Following her passion for science, Butler believes that after graduating she may like to work towards becoming a veterinarian. As a participant in the Dana Program, there is no doubt she will be successful in whatever career she decides to pursue.

Ian Dworkin

By Gillian Irwin

“There are opportunities to be had, but you have to find them.” These are the words that Ian Dworkin chose to describe his experiences in the Dana program, and his four years at Muhlenberg are a testimony to their truth. Ian is the model of what a well-rounded college student should be. During his college experience, Ian has involved himself in a variety of activities, all of them intellectually stimulating. Many of his pursuits are academic, some related to his Biology major. Ian works as a tutor in Biology and Chemistry, a Head Tutor, a Writing Assistant, and a Microbiology lab assistant. He also is a member of the Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Society. In his spare time, Ian enjoys a variety of other activities – and not exactly what you’d expect from the typical Biology student. Ian is an avid surfer, loves to travel, and is also the drummer for a band on campus named Victor’s Lament, described on Facebook as “a tasty blend of many musical genres including but not limited to ska, funk, soul, and punk.” Ian also enjoys volunteering at the 6th Street Shelter in Allentown.



Through his experience with the Dana program, Ian was able to participate in two internships during his time at Muhlenberg. The first, at Lehigh Valley Hospital, was a research and observation internship with an OB/GYN. During his second internship, Ian was able to get even more in touch with his work, creating a product that would follow glucose administration during surgery at Jefferson Medical Center in the artificial pancreas center. Ian and the group that he worked with on the project are now hoping to get the product they created during the internship patented.

After this semester is over, Ian plans on traveling while finishing his research for the Dana Forum. He plans to attend medical school next fall. Overall, Ian considers the Dana program “the icing on the cake” when it comes to his experience at Muhlenberg. He described his First Year Seminar as an “engaging, provocative class” that was “a great environment for people who are thinking critically.” Ian truly has taken his own advice when it comes to the Dana program – there *are* many opportunities to be had, and he has successfully found them.

Alison Long

By Sabrina Kamran



Alison Long is a Psychology major and Spanish minor and is a senior in the Dana Scholars Program. Alison participates on the intramural soccer team and is a member of the Psychology Club and the Gay Straight Alliance. The Dana program influenced Alison freshman year beginning with Dr. Jeremy Tiessere, her First Year Seminar professor. Alison’s first year seminar, “Other Bodies,” greatly changed her way of thinking, allowing her to critically examine the world around her and to articulate ideas more clearly. Alison also studied abroad in Argentina during the fall 2008 semester.

This opportunity gave her the chance to enhance her command of the Spanish language and to focus on aspects of sociology within Argentine society. Throughout her years at Muhlenberg, Alison has done research in Psychology with multiple professors, including Dr. Edelman and Dr. Rudski, in which she investigated topics such as gender and gender roles, preconscious processing, religion and superstition. Alison plans to continue her research, as well as foster a growing interest in art, until her graduation from the College in May 2010. Alison’s immediate plan following graduation is to move to Ocean City, New Jersey, at which point she plans on finding a job until she decides where and if she will apply to graduate school.

Antonina Pinette

By Megan Postemski

Antonina Pinette graduated from Muhlenberg in 2009 and is now participating in a five month internship with the Chicago Botanic Garden. This internship is related to her double major in political and environmental science. With this internship, she is dealing with the Bureau of Land Management, which manages land in the western United States. Nina is originally from South Portland, Maine, but is currently living in Grand Junction, Colorado to participate in the internship.

During her time at Muhlenberg, Nina was very involved on campus as secretary of EnAct, a student representative on the President's Greening Committee, and at her job at the library. When asked what college experiences she found most influential, she responded that studying abroad was very important because it made you go "beyond the classroom."

Specifically, Nina went to Kenya with the School of Field Studies. This program allowed her to do fieldwork, conduct research, and go on safaris. She said the trip was interesting because there was a lot of interaction between students and the local Kenyans. After her semester in Kenya, Nina did her Dana mentorship with Dr. Christopher Herrick of the political science department. She examined environmental policy in Kenya and its impact on the environment.

Unlike most students, Nina went abroad again, but this time on a two and a half week program in Bangladesh with Political Science professor Dr. Mohsin Hashim and Dr. Jack Gambino. This trip also allowed her to work closely with the local people. The experience focused on climate change in Bangladesh, which, as she phrased it, "is like ground zero for climate change," implying that rising temperatures could wreak havoc in the region. Moreover, Nina said that this experience made the concept of climate change and its effects on people more clear on an emotional level.

Nina was a passionate student while at Muhlenberg, and benefited from going abroad and beyond. She also praised the internship requirement of the Dana program for its emphasis on learning beyond the classroom. In the summer of 2008, she interned with the National Science Foundation's Research Experience for Undergraduates. Specifically, the internship helped her think beyond college in terms of her desires for a future career. Overall, she recalled the mentorship with Dr. Herrick and her internship as "good opportunities." Through her very positive experiences abroad and with the Dana program, Nina has been able to pursue her interests beyond Muhlenberg.



Anna Stressenger

By Jennifer Seeba



Anna Stressenger is a senior at Muhlenberg College and a great example of how one decision can have a huge impact on your life. The decision to join the Dana program here was an easy one for her; after she applied, she received the application for the Dana program and filled it out without hesitation. Her Dana freshman seminar was titled "Boundaries and Belonging," and was taught by Dr. Janine Chi. It was the class that initially introduced her to sociology and was "the highlight of the week" her freshman year. Three years later, Anna is a sociology major who still works very closely with her first year seminar instructor, Dr. Chi.

Anna is originally from Maine, and while Muhlenberg may be a sizeable distance away from her hometown, it is by no means the farthest she has been away from home during her time here. She studied abroad in Argentina and, while there, traveled extensively throughout the country. Her research project there focused on how export agriculture affects Argentina's small farming population. The trip was

very educational for her, and the immersion in the Spanish language allowed her to become fluent. “At first it was hard, translating the Spanish to English and then the English to Spanish,” she says, “but eventually you just began to think in Spanish and it all became a lot easier.” Although she has always had an interest in Spanish, you may not be able to tell just by looking at her major or future plans. A sociology major, she is undecided about what she wants to do in the future, although graduate school or law school is an option. A job in the government could be in her future too. Sociology “gives a lot of options,” she states. “Things can change.”

The Dana program has had extensive influence on Anna’s college career. In addition to introducing her to what would become her major, the Dana program provided lots of encouragement for her flourishing college career. Instead of doing the traditional one independent study and one internship required by the Dana program, Anna did 2 independent studies for credit and interned over the summer. She interned at Toxics Action Center, which is an organization that helps community members organize and stand up against pesticide problems. There, among other things, she helped compose a thick newsletter of basic information informing people of what herbicides were, what problems they could cause, and what people can do about it. Her two independent studies consisted of a photo independent study and an honors thesis independent study. When asked how her college experience at Muhlenberg was affected by Dana program, she replied that without the Dana program and her Dana first year seminar, “college would be totally different.”

Emily Harris

By James Gumkowski

The Dana program is one that is supposed to challenge high achievers, allow them to intern and mentor, and, ultimately, prepare them for the future after Muhlenberg. But does it really accomplish all of this? Emily Harris, a senior Dana Scholar, thinks so. A Spanish major with an interest in law, Emily has been through the full gauntlet of Dana programs. She started out with a Dana-specific freshman seminar about “freaks” and what really constitutes such a person. She said that it was in this class that she learned that “opinions matter” at Muhlenberg. From there, she spent time as an intern and in a mentorship position.

The mentorship, which was with Dr. Sharon Albert in the religion department, was about the role of women and veils in society. Though Emily did not plan to major or minor in religion, she found the experience to be truly enlightening and very interesting. She interned at the prosecutor’s office and it was there that her interest in law started. Though she did not initially know what she wanted to major in, she became fascinated with Spanish classes in particular. Because of her double interest, she decided to combine the two and look forward to helping Spanish speakers in the judicial system with defense work.

Outside of the Dana program and academics, Emily is involved in numerous extracurricular activities. The two that are most prominent in her college experience are being a part of the judicial committee and participating in the Best Buddies program. Best Buddies is an activity where a student pairs up with a mentally challenged individual to help them to learn. Emily has also studied abroad and felt that her visit to Seville, Spain was one of the most amazing experiences in her life. Though her time at Muhlenberg is fast coming to a close, she left one piece of encouraging information, saying, “Each year just got better and better.” With so many fond memories behind her, it is safe to say that the Dana program seems to have accomplished all of its lofty goals for Emily Harris.



Joe Armenti

By Nathan Crossette



Joe Armenti, a Dana scholar and senior, has had a rich experience while at Muhlenberg both within and outside of the Dana Program. While he originally planned to go the pre-med track at Muhlenberg, Joe eventually discovered that he felt more strongly called to English and Political Science. Joe's Dana First Year Seminar was "Boundaries and Belongings" with Dr. Janine Chi. Since his Dana Seminar, Joe has interned with several lawyers and lawmakers. His first internship was with Alongi and Associates where he worked in Surety Law.

Joe also interned with Kevin J. O'Toole, a Republican state senator for New Jersey, during an FBI investigation into the Democratic Party of New Jersey. His latest internship was with United States

Congressman Charles W. Dent from Pennsylvania's 15th District. Joe has also served as his Class President and currently serves on the Student Advisory Committee for the Dana Program. As a senior in the Dana Program, Joe and all of the other senior Dana Scholars reunite for their Dana Forum. The Dana Forum is a yearlong "capstone" experience which is based on The Center for Ethics' Issue of the Year, which this year is entitled "Ethics of Space, Power of Place." Next year Joe plans to attend Law School and continue to pursue his interests in International Relations and Healthcare.

Looking back on his Dana experience, Joe said that the Dana Program "seeks to push you out of your comfort zone." Specifically, he described his Dana Seminar as a "slap in the face" his first year on campus because it challenged him to write at a highly analytical level. Developing the abilities of looking at something from many different directions and challenging preconceived ideas are heavily emphasized in the Seminar and all throughout the Dana experience. These skills, according to Joe, are priceless abilities.

Justine Ide

By James Patefield

Justine Ide, a Senior Dana Scholar at Muhlenberg, says her experiences within the Dana program and throughout college as a whole have been incredibly life-altering. She describes herself as "changed completely from freshman year... I'm so much more comfortable and outgoing now." Justine is a Physics major and Philosophy minor; she is currently working on a research project with the physics department to help discover new planets using a telescope which the department has access to in Australia. She has greatly appreciated the internships and mentorships that the program has connected her with; she served her first internship assisting in research at Brookhaven as well as at the University of Illinois.

Her second internship was through Disciplemakers Christian Fellowship, with whom she still serves on campus. Justine will train with Disciplemakers to be a full-time minister after graduation. As part of her training, she will be immersed into a comprehensive three-year program at Penn State, where she will undergo in-depth Bible study and courses on ministry coordination. In conjunction with her minor, she is working with the philosophy department for their Ethics of Space project. She is examining the how effective governmental administration of the city of Jerusalem might be possible amidst the religious and social tensions that run deep in the region and in the city itself, where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (the supposed location of Golgotha), the Western Wall of the Temple, and the

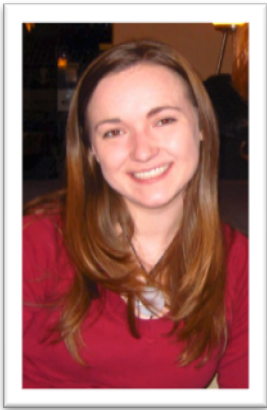


Dome of the Rock are all within a two mile proximity of each other. As part of her project, Justine is examining the governing philosophies and ideologies of each of the three religions in the city.

Needless to say, Justine's track record is extensive and impressive. She credits her success to the fact that the Dana program has pushed her so hard to strive for success. Overall, though, the most profound experience she has gained at Muhlenberg is that of her faith: she was not a Christian before College. "I guess you could've described me as an Agnostic, if I had ever been asked... [I wasn't] anything in particular." Here, she has found her faith and a vocational calling through that faith.

Sarah Illing

By Danielle Luszczuk



Sarah Illing is a passionate and hard-working senior in the Dana Scholars Program. Originally from South Carolina, Sarah chose to attend Muhlenberg because of its appeal as a liberal arts college; not only because she was able to major in neuroscience, but she was also able to take courses in other areas such as music. When asked what some of her favorite classes have been throughout the years, Sarah thought back to Multicultural Psychology, Society of Medicine, and her first year Dana seminar, "Other Bodies." One of the reasons Sarah enjoyed this FYS was because it "challenged our perspectives." She also went on to talk about the interesting dialogues that were at the heart of this compelling class. In addition to being a Dana Scholar, Sarah is the Treasurer of both the Gay-Straight Alliance and Best Buddies. She is also a first year seminar writing assistant, and has been for three years.

Even with all of the ways in which Sarah is involved on campus in Pennsylvania, she still found time to study abroad in Buenos Aires in the fall of 2008. Sarah was also a summer research scholar at Lehigh Valley Hospital. She is currently completing an independent study on the disparity of mental health for Spanish speaking societies. In looking towards life after Muhlenberg, Sarah has applied for a Fulbright Scholarship to teach English in Columbia, and also plans on earning a PhD in community psychology. Sarah Illing is the perfect example of a well-rounded Dana Scholar, and I'm sure she will be greatly missed!

Rachel Ammerman

By Steven Alpert

Rachael Ammerman is a Spanish and Psychology double major from Boston, MA. On campus she has been on the Hillel Executive board as well as a member of Comunidad Latina. She has also participated in the Community Exchange program, helping others learn English. Off campus, she taught religious school and worked at the JCC daycare. Next year she hopes to return to Spain, where she studied abroad during her junior year, to become an English teaching assistant through the Fulbright Program.

One of her greatest experiences in the Dana program was participating in a mentorship with Psychology professors doing research on parenting perceptions of stay at home fathers. She enjoyed this experience because she wants to help children and learn more about the effects of parents on kids. Next semester she hopes to do an internship at the Valley Youth House.



Being around other people who enjoy being intellectually challenged is one of the best aspects of the DANA program and the FYS, according to Rachel, as well as being encouraged to push yourself academically. She believes that the internship requirement is an excellent part of the program because it forces you to go outside of the classroom in order to learn.

While she was in Spain during the spring semester of her junior year she studied at the Center for Cross-Cultural Study in Seville. Throughout the semester she was able to visit various Spanish cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, Cordoba, Gibraltar, and Grenada. She even traveled to Morocco and Portugal. Rachael loved Spain and studying in another country. She was able to see another country while bringing her abilities in Spanish to the next level.

The greatest piece of advice that Rachael has for underclassmen is to study abroad. Not only do you learn about a different culture, but you learn through adjusting and adapting to that culture and through this adjusting you grow as an individual. She urges all students to have this once-in-a-lifetime experience. Throughout her four years at Muhlenberg, Rachael has truly made the most of the DANA program and all that it has to offer.

Sarah Evans

By Eric Hamilton



Sarah Evans is a Dana Scholar in her fourth year at Muhlenberg College. This lovely and talented senior will be graduating with two degrees, one in theater and the other in music. Sarah plans on attending graduate school after her departure from Muhlenberg with a focus in music education. The ideal situation for Sarah after graduate school would be to become a music teacher in high school.

For her Dana First Year Seminar, Sarah participated in the Boundaries and Belonging class which was taught by Dr. Chi. When discussing the class, Sarah described the course as absolutely wonderful yet terrifying at the same time. The FYS, according to Sarah, forced her to view the world from a different perspective which made her almost uncomfortable. However, Sarah said that the experience has made her more aware of her surroundings and was an overall positive experience.

After completing the first requirement of the Dana program, the FYS, Sarah continued on to complete the internship portion of Dana. Instead of completing an internship and an independent study like most Danas, Sarah chose to participate in two internships. Sarah's first internship was with the Lehigh Valley Arts Council where she helped to promote art programs and kept the council in contact with members. Another important job Sarah performed was to help create a directory of the members of the Council. Sarah partook in her second internship while studying abroad in Italy. This second internship was with the Teatro del Maggio Musicale which is an Opera house in Florence, Italy where Sarah worked as a lighting technician intern.

Sarah is currently participating in the Dana Forum which is a regular class for the first half of the year, and for the second half centers around a large project where each Dana forms a group with a few of their fellow students. The forum is always centered on ethics, but this year's specific theme focuses on the boundaries and ethics of space and urban development. Sarah has just finished the first half of her journey through the Dana forum and is extremely excited to start the project portion of the class.

Cecilia De Souza

By Daniel Langenbucher

Cecilia De Souza, a senior Dana scholar majoring in Natural Science and minoring in Sociology, stands out above the crowd. In addition to the rigorous academic guidelines required by the Dana Scholars Program, Cecilia managed to find time in her busy schedule to take part in an internship for the annual Science Day with Professor Cronon, where she will be not only participating in but also planning the events for the day at a local elementary school. Cecilia also took advantage of one of the many services offered to Muhlenberg students: alternative spring break. In years past, she has traveled to Israel and China. It is this hallmark, the desire to explore and step outside of one's comfort zone, that is evident in every Dana Scholar; not content to merely learn about the environment, Cecilia traveled to a lion reservation in Zimbabwe, where she spent her previous summer; as part of her independent study with Dr. Chi, she conducted research on parts of her experience. Her favorite class here at Muhlenberg, a class she took with Tammy Lewis on environmental sociology, is an example of another trademark of the Dana Scholar: the interest in a vast range of topics and the attempts to connect them. Looking back on her experience, she had this to say: "The best part of the DANA program for me was the opportunity to get to work with multiple faculty members on internship and mentorships that I may not have had the opportunity to do otherwise." It is this quality that drives Dana Scholars: the thirst for knowledge and the refusal of a quick answer. Instead of simply stopping at the end of the page, Danas go off into the world to further their knowledge about their chosen fields of study, as Cecilia did.



Tyler Huffman



As a senior physics major, Tyler Huffman believes that the Dana Program at Muhlenberg has given him "a great deal of experience in areas of physics that usually aren't touched on in an undergraduate physics program." Tyler was raised in Kittanning, PA. Aside from academics, he has always been interested in skiing and ice skating. In his decision to attend Muhlenberg, Tyler was drawn to the liberal arts curriculum because he felt that "it's important to know a little bit about as much as you can [;] it lets you relate to more people, and have a better perspective on the world around you." Tyler is certainly an outstanding example of the applied benefits of the Dana program. Last summer and continuing into this fall, Tyler conducted in-depth string theory research alongside Dr. Clark. He explains, "It was a great opportunity to get to do some more current physics." Were it not for the Dana program, he may never have received this incredible individual mentoring in such a narrow field of interest. Tyler places equal emphasis on the value of the Dana first-year seminar, as he claims, "it was a great introduction [to] how to think like a college student, and how to read and write critically. The 'other bodies' theme of the seminar that year forced me a bit outside my comfort zone, which in hindsight was great." While he admits the seminar was demanding, he believes this challenge ultimately provided the precise pressure and motivation needed to grow as an intellectual. Additionally, Tyler has taken full advantage of the Dana senior forum as an appealing "opportunity to work with people from any number of different disciplines on a project," and eagerly awaits the final product in the spring of 2010. Following his graduation from Muhlenberg, Tyler plans to attend graduate school where he hopes to earn a Ph.D. in physics and become a professor. Clearly, the Dana Associates program has endowed Tyler with the experience and confidence necessary to achieve this goal.

Trisha Kadakia

By Casey Moser

From the first moment Trisha Kadakia found out that she was selected to be a Dana Scholar, she was excited. Now, as she finishes up her last year at Muhlenberg, she is still just as, if not more enthusiastic about the Dana Associates program and the opportunities it has given her over her four years. At first, Kadakia was excited to be “surrounded by peers that wanted that same challenge” and felt that, “this collaboration and interaction would serve me well in academic and personal development.” The Dana Program has given Kadakia many opportunities to collaborate with her peers and her professors. Kadakia had the opportunity to pursue her interest in neuropharmacology through an internship with Dr. Jeremy Teissère at the Lehigh Valley Hospital. She will continue to pursue it after college when she attends Drexel University College of Medicine. Kadakia cites the type of learning done in her Dana classes as one of the major influences in her success. The Dana Program taught her “that the most effective way to understand something, succeed in something, or change something is to approach it in an interdisciplinary way.”



But besides the academic strength and opportunities of the program, Kadakia has also enjoyed the people she has met through the Dana program, both her professors and her peers. “People that I met on the first day of school freshmen year through the Dana program have remained my best friends at this school, so it is also a place in which lasting relationships are built.” Kadakia encourages all present and future Dana Scholars to make the most out of their Dana and college experiences. “Go through the Dana program (and the rest of college, for that matter) with an open mind willing to explore and you'd be surprised at how many things you learn in class, in internships, and most importantly in life.”

Sarah Rosenthal

By Emily Ancona



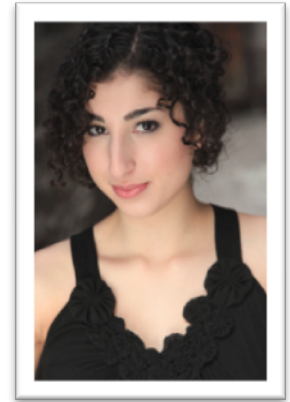
“The class that opened up my academic experience and really pushed me to think outside the box was my FYS: Boundaries and Belonging with Dr. Chi,” says Sarah Rosenthal. From the onset of her college career, the Dana program has been a guiding force in Sara’s life on campus. A Media & Communication major with a minor in Jewish Studies, Sarah has utilized her time at Muhlenberg with great drive. Involving herself in many aspects of campus life, Sarah notes that the organizations with which she has become involved have really “shaped the way [she] sees [herself] on campus.” As a tour guide, active member of Hillel, Advocacy Chair of Relay for Life in association with Colleges Against Cancer, and Vice President of Membership of Alpha Phi Omega, the community service fraternity on campus, she certainly keeps herself occupied.

During the spring of her junior year Sarah brought her considerable talents abroad to Cape Town, South Africa. Sarah describes her internship with the Dana program as an “eye-opening experience.” Working for the American Cancer Society in Bethlehem Sarah made a media kit for relay for life. She notes that it was exciting for her to work with a nonprofit group in a context beyond the boundaries of her major. Currently, Sarah is working on her mentorship with Jessica Cooperman. Their goal is to deconstruct the methods by which the Holocaust is taught and presented amongst different nations, specifically America, Germany, and Israel. The future is bright for Sarah. She is currently considering going to graduate school in a few years and feels that she might one day like to work on or with a college campus.

Rebecca Haverson

By Garrett Gallinot

"The Dana FYS I got put into completely changed my college trajectory. ...I came in very unsure of what I wanted to do major-wise, besides dance, but was absolutely taken in by the class material," said Rebecca Haverson. She is majoring in international studies, with a concentration in developing nations studies, largely due to the material presented in her Dana seminar. "It definitely changed the way that I began to approach thinking about race, gender, ethnicity, international issues, etc., and this in turn affected the way that I have developed as a writer." Rebecca studied abroad her junior year and went to Khon Kaen, Thailand for five months on a program focused on globalization and development. There, she participated in many home stays and worked with grassroots organizations and NGO's as well as learning to speak some Thai! This program motivated her to do an internship over the summer with Save the Children, a large international NGO and humanitarian



Along with her focus in international studies, Rebecca participates in many other Muhlenberg programs and maximizes her use of what the college has to offer. She was a writing assistant in 2007 for Dr. Thomas Cragin's Dana seminar, Representing the Age of Revolution, and is currently a writing tutor for the college. She is also a member of the Muhlenberg Dance Association and has performed both in student and faculty dance recitals. She has choreographed dance pieces both this year and last year for the major student dance shows, "Moving Stories." She is also the co-editor in Chief of the online newspaper, the Muhlenberg Advocate.

While Rebecca Haverson has always been a motivated person, the Dana Program helped her think of types of projects and research she wanted to pursue and ultimately aided her in finding a major that she both enjoyed and found fulfilling to pursue. Rebecca is truly an exemplary example of a Dana student who took advantage of all her opportunities here at Muhlenberg campus!

Heather Mill

By Davis Alianiello



"Get involved," advises Muhlenberg senior and Dana Scholar Heather Mill, "[because] Muhlenberg is a place where you are living in a community." In her four years here at the college, Heather Mills has certainly embraced that spirit of community. She is a member of Student Government, Delta Zeta sorority, and the Muhlenberg Dance Association. "Extracurricular activities mean so much to me," says Heather, "they truly create a cooperative academic and social community." When I asked her about her future, Heather answered with confidence and optimism: "the skills I have learned," she said, "will continue to impact my life. I am hoping to pursue research in Health Communication and eventually teach." Heather is taking active steps to reach her goals: she recently applied to the PhD program in Communications at the prestigious University of Pennsylvania. Heather will graduate this spring with a Media and

Communication major with a double minor in Dance and Business. Her diverse academic tastes exemplify the ambition and academic voraciousness that lie at the heart of the liberal arts education. Her Dana internship with the Muhlenberg Department of Theatre and Dance as a marketing associate allowed her to independently investigate the field of public relations and marketing, and her mentorship gave her the opportunity to write a review of literature on arts education. Heather channeled her ambition to help the whole college community: as one of three student representatives on the Parent's Planning Group and as a member of the faculty Academic Policy Committee, she helped review the strategic plan for the college's future with the faculty and administration. "I feel my voice was truly heard and I see development that I helped initiate," says Heather, "Muhlenberg is unique in its commitment to student output."

Lauren Jensen

By Catherine “Pearly” Ezzio

Lauren Jensen is a French and Art double major from Maine who used her time here at Muhlenberg to question and challenge assumptions made by the world around her. Her Dana First Year Seminar course, while difficult, was extremely rewarding because, she stated, “the course, the content, and the conversations taught me how to question what I was learning instead of blindly accepting the information that was given to me”. Ultimately, Lauren’s FYS had an enormous impact on her view and pursuit of education because it made her challenge what she was learning, thus taking a much more active role in her college career.



After such a great experience with her first year seminar, Lauren chose courses based on how much they would force her to push her limits and “stretch [her] understanding of the world around [her]”. Her French courses discussed science, culture, history, political science, art, and society of the time. She decided to challenge herself at an entirely different level by spending a semester in Aix-en-Provence, France, which she considers to be “by far the greatest decision I’ve ever made.” She found the foreign location and course content to be extremely rewarding because it placed her in a constant learning environment where she was forced to apply the material she learned to every aspect of life.

Lauren’s internship with Dr. Hashim in the fall of 2008 was aimed at giving back to the Dana program. She worked with local organizations to make a database of internship opportunities; her efforts have made it much easier for future Danas to find and contact an organization for an internship that interests them. As a senior, Lauren has been working with Dr. Eileen McEwan of the French department on her mentorship, which is focused on how women are portrayed in Franco-American literature. Lauren says her mentorship is “a wonderful opportunity because it lets me be totally independent and design my focus to fit my interests”. She studied several novels written by Franco-American authors and is going to use the author’s, narrator’s and female protagonist’s voices to illustrate to extend the role of the woman beyond childcare and keeping house and show the complexities of her importance and place in society.

After she graduates from Muhlenberg, Lauren plans to continue her education by taking linguistics and classes and going to graduate school for speech pathology. She is most looking forward to studying bilingual language acquisition and incorporating art into her studies to treat children with communication disorders.

Jenn Lavelle

By Evan Fletcher



Jenn Lavelle, '09, majored in English with minors in political science and environmental studies. Some of her favorite classes were Environmental Politics and Policy Making, Irish Literature, and Sustainable Development in Bangladesh. During her college career Jenn was heavily involved with EnAct, serving on the executive board her senior year. She says that “If EnAct was a class, it would have been one of my favorites.” As for the Dana Program, Jenn says “[It] definitely made me a more independent thinker and allowed me to pursue research projects and an internship that I might not have otherwise.” She found her senior year Dana seminar, which focused on the theme of citizenship, to be very interesting and she enjoyed the independence it allowed. Also, Jenn took a trip to Bangladesh with other Muhlenberg students, which she described as incredible. “Having never been to a developing country, it was eye-opening for me to see such poverty, so starkly

different from the American lifestyle,” she says. It was very interesting for her to learn so much about a country and then experience it all first-hand.

Jenn is now participating in a two-year public advocacy fellowship working with Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG), which is based in Portland, Oregon. OSPIRG is an organization that stands up to powerful special interests in order to advocate on behalf of the public on a wide variety of issues that span from making healthcare more affordable to fighting political corruption. After her work with the fellowship at OSPIRG, Jenn sees herself doing the same type of work she is doing now. She finds the non-profit world fits her well, calling it “extremely challenging, but also very rewarding.” She says that a law degree would be helpful to continue this sort of work in a deeper way, but doesn’t see herself obtaining one for several more years. Jenn seems to have a definite passion for standing up for public interest and making sure the people’s voice is heard. The independent nature of the Dana Scholars Program has obviously complimented Jenn’s interests and helped make her the type of passionate person she is today.

Matthew Balaban

By Krista Gabarro

A double major in Neuroscience and Music with a concentration in pipe organ performance, Matt is an active, dynamic and engaged student. The Dana program’s first year seminar taught him “how to think about things around [him] in a new way, in a way that was skeptical of the scientific objective reasoning that [he] had grown up on; more and more to [him] seemed steeped in a pool of subjectivity that denied immediate access to its deeper parts shielded by presuppositions and unspoken misconceptions.” He realized the strong bonds formed between Dana scholars are due to an inclination to dissect ideas and issues from a multi-disciplinary approach that embraces individual input and differing angles. His favorite classes, and consequently those from which he learned most, “put a large emphasis on the development of cultivating [his] ideas and articulating them so that they can grow further.” From classes of this type, Matt learned “that there is a great deal of academic meat that can be dug out from practically any idea through dialogue, and [he] realized how crucial mechanisms of discussion were, so every member of the classroom can become a more empowered agent of his or her ideas.” Matt is involved in the Muhlenberg community and is a Peer Tutor, in College Choir, Chamber Singers, Collegium Musicum, Chamber Orchestra, EnAcT (Environmental Action Team), Yoga, and Lutheran Student Movement.

Studying abroad most significantly affected Matt’s college experience. Gaining a broader perception of our world, Matt realized the extent of the influence our surroundings have on our perspective. Traveling to India and Bangladesh, Matt’s world view was expanded. He came to understand that “what humanity is is not what we see around us, what we know through our brief experiences of social interaction. Humanity extends far beyond as far as we can see; when we consider the infinite ways in which a person is directed to grow and believe, there is no question that we always have something to learn from one another and never could actually possess a universal truth”. While in Bangladesh, Matt was presented with matters in which he is very interested and holds in high esteem, like sustainable development and climate change. He sees that “there’s a great deal of work to be done” to counter these worldly issues. Matt says, “Although I don’t know what the answers are or how to fix things, everything is a learning process. Maybe that’s the best gift—not an answer but a direction that ensures that there’s always something new to learn.”

Matt hopes to be awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to be an English Teaching assistant in Bangladesh for the 2011 school year. He plans to teach English abroad for some time and participate in the Peace Corps, possibly attending medical school in the future.



Dr. Rosenwasser

By Emily Gup

Dr. Rosenwasser, affectionately known as DR to his students, has taught the First-Year-Seminar “Alice and Beyond” three times prior to this year. Yet being in his class, one would never guess because he remains completely engaged in further dissection of the text. He learns with his students and writes furiously along with the class during the regular in-class free writes. Currently, what interests him most in Alice in Wonderland is the relationship between nonsense and absurdity. Not only is he a brilliant and dedicated professor, but he is also the co-author of Writing Analytically, which teaches students how to become more thoughtful and thorough writers.

The environment DR creates in the classroom is unlike what most freshmen at Muhlenberg have ever experienced. One of his primary teaching styles is to “relocate authority.” He establishes a classroom in which he shares the authority and control with students. This is made evident when he opens a class by asking an unsuspecting student, “So, what would you like to talk about today?” The third arc of “Alice and Beyond” was determined by a student vote. Students have a more personal stake in their education, which will most likely yield to a more meaningful outcome.

Not only does DR build a foreign classroom environment for first year college students, he also strives to deconstruct the “hierarchy of education.” DR recognizes that Danas are used to educational hierarchy. Being placed in an honors program feeds directly into that system. But he says education is about getting beyond the self and to escape from rankings and superficial structures that a certain type of education can impose. DR parallels his goal to deconstruct hierarchy in education to the deconstruction of hierarchy in Alice in Wonderland. Authoritative figures are mocked in the novel, and DR describes the obtrusive Humpty Dumpty as an example of the danger of authority and exerting too much of it.

DR sums up the challenge education presents to students. In relation to Alice in Wonderland, students have an option of becoming one of two Alices: Tenniel’s illustrations of Alice, or Dodgson’s (Lewis Carroll) Alice Liddell on whom the book is based. Tenniel’s illustrations of Alice depict a blond, round-faced, innocent little girl. Dodgson’s photograph of Alice Liddell depicts a knowing and mesmerizing child. One is safe, and the other is daunting. You can guess which Alice DR aims to cultivate in his students.

Dr. Cragin

By Benjamin Schweid

Dr. Cragin has been a faculty member at Muhlenberg College for five years, and for three of those he has been teaching the Dana first year seminars. When asked about the Dana program, he had only positive things to say. He thought that the first year seminars were a fantastic idea for both the instructor and the student. It places motivated and capable students in an environment where they can have in depth class discussions. Dr. Cragin also said that he enjoys teaching the Dana seminars and that he felt that the program was very successful. However he thought that was a lack in the program between freshman and senior year. He advocated that there should be seminars throughout a student’s time at Muhlenberg. The seminars could include subjects like philosophy, and religion, or other areas of academics that would fulfill general requirements. This would benefit students in two ways. Not only would it provide a path to fulfill the requirements, it would also place students in academic environment where they would thrive for all four years. Furthermore it would create strong bonds between the students themselves as they would get to know everyone involved in the Dana program. Dr. Cragin is a strong supporter of the Dana honors program.

Review of “Representing the Age of Revolution” FYS

By Amanda Brennan

When I first found out that I was to be in this class, I have to admit I was a little apprehensive. Revolution meant history, something I enjoyed learning about in high school but hadn't expected to relive during my college experience. I knew, though, that as one of the Dana seminars it had to be at least worthwhile, and so I resolved to make the best of what I was sure to be a boring and repetitious course.

Never before I have been so glad to be wrong! Upon setting foot in Dr. Cragin's classroom, I immediately found myself re-evaluating the seminar. Not only had I made friends during orientation with the students in my seminar, but from the very first lesson Dr. Cragin made history exciting. The French Revolution and the pivotal events leading up to it came alive in Ettinger 201.

Throughout the semester we analyzed the works of Montesquieu and Rousseau, discussed viewpoints of Michelet, Lefebvre, and Doyle, and even held a debate about the differing opinions of Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine. With lectures mixed in to provide a historical knowledge of the French Revolution period, we spent the latter part of the semester reading and examining Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*.

For me, the most interesting aspect of the course was the research done for two of our six papers. We each chose a topic to examine and to later connect to Dickens' novel. The result of this undertaking led to a greater depth of understanding of the novel, one which I was pleasantly surprised to acquire.

In the end, the seminar was more than just an exploration of the French Revolution. It gave us a chance to develop both our writing and argumentation skills, as well as providing a group of friends with whom I thoroughly enjoyed experiencing my first year seminar.

Review of “Alice and Beyond” FYS

By Jenna Kotak

I cannot say that I “like” the Dana First Year Seminar “Alice and Beyond.” One of the first things that Dr. Rosenwasser taught us was that we need to look beyond what we like and dislike if we want to become truly analytical thinkers. So, in order to not blaspheme against my favorite class, I will say that I find “Alice and Beyond” “interesting.”

The “Alice and Beyond” course has completely morphed my understanding of reading. Instead of progressing forward in a horizontal reading of the text, we have learned to apply a vertical analysis to the text that helps to dwell on details and their meanings. Each class is marked by class discussions that dwell on specific passages, requiring analysis and free writes that allow us to compose and compact our thoughts and questions about specific and detailed passages in one of the most confusing and complex stories I have read. The discussions are challenging and force us to constantly ask “Why?” and “So What?” as we notice more about the text itself. After reading Lewis Carroll's *Alice and Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, we have begun to look at different articles concerning the Alice stories and author, each with a unique perspective to further analyze this book. For the last portion of our class, we decided to look at Alice's portrayal in film and photography.

Many people have seen the Disney version of “Alice in Wonderland,” yet reading the story is a very different experience. As expected, Disney presents its own interpretation of a novel too complex for film, and this is what a majority of the people know about “Alice in Wonderland.” It has been illuminating to read the actual story of Alice, and it is an experience I would recommend to everyone in the Muhlenberg community.

The class is unlike any experience I have encountered. It is not simply focused on a complex piece of writing, but also on the way we think and learning to push our thinking even further. I enjoy the democratic nature to the class as well. Each class decision, from when papers are due to what we want to study, is left to class discussions and votes. We have also had different professors come to speak with our class about additional studies applicable to the Alice books, such as Dr. Jeremy Teissere, who taught our class about dreams and their relation to the waking world, an important aspect of the Alice books.

“Alice and Beyond” is an engaging seminar that not only teaches us about the long range impact of *Alice in Wonderland*, but expands our minds to understand such a complex “children's story.”