

Finding One's Voice

BY ERIC BUDD

Ever since she first learned to read and discovered that there are people out there who make their living by writing books, Dr. DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld knew what she wanted to do with her life. In 8th grade, she was part of a club that met once a week in their English teacher's classroom. Over their brown bag lunches, the students talked about such social critiques as *A Brave New World*, *1984*, and *Children of a Lesser God*. It was in those discussions that Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld realized she too wanted to write. However, it was not until she got to college that she realized that all of the writers she appreciated were white men. She had been vicariously taught that those are the voices that can write, or should write. As a result, most of the characters in her early work were white men. Fortunately, after reading the classic work of such authors as Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, and Amy Tan, she found her own voice, and her own characters.

Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld writes both fiction and poetry. For both types of writing, she draws upon a wide range of sources. She enjoys incorporating different elements of history, especially US history, into her work, along with elements from folklore or mythology. Her love of music also feeds her work, and she tends to bring elements of poetry into her fiction, particularly imagery, which her readers derive implications and insights from her writing. According to Bellinger-Delfeld, "I want my readers to be smarter than I am."

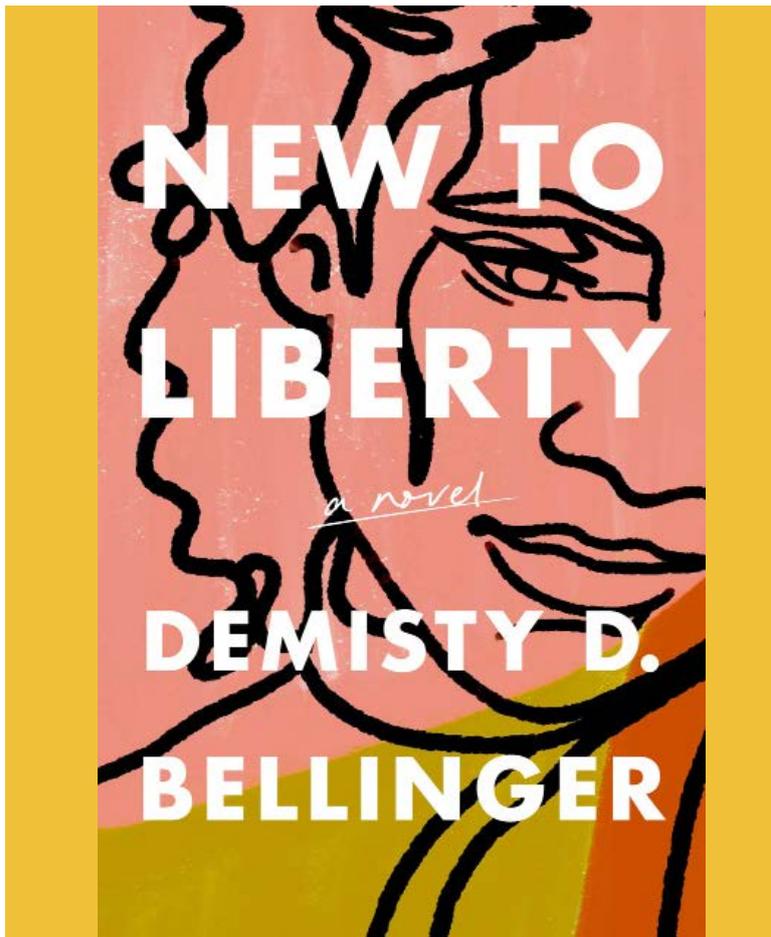
When asked how her poetry or fiction has changed over the years, Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld said, "There is still

that style, that voice, and that rhythm. The musicality or however you want to put it. I continue to embrace this love of history and art of all kinds, and that has come through more and more in the writing."

One change is that she feels that she can take more risks in her writing. With tenure and several publications under her belt, she is less concerned about getting published, and more focused on her teaching and experimenting with her craft.

This month, Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld's novel *New to Liberty* will be published by Unnamed Press. Originally her dissertation, the novel tells the stories of three different women across three periods in time. It begins with the dustbowl, and the story of Greta, who falls in love with another woman, who is married to a farmer. The second story, set in the 1940s, revolves around Greta's son, who is in love with an African American woman until "something horrible happens." The final story is set in the 1960s, and deals with the son of Greta's lover, who is in a May-December relationship. Each story is women-centered, with each woman having to define herself. Ultimately, they find freedom by realizing that they can take control of their lives. Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld is already hard at work on another novel, which also cuts across different time periods and tells the





stories of different characters. In that novel, the main character gets to meet her ancestors, thanks to a form of magic, similar to voodoo that Bellinger-Delfeld invented for the book.

In addition to the novel, she has a long-term poetry project. In that work, she looks at pieces of art by the Great Masters or European artists, where their subject was People of Color. In the first part of the collection, the poems try to give voice to those People of Color, while the second half will be a selection of poems inspired by the artwork of People of Color. After she found her own voice back in college, Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld is now using her fiction, her poetry, and her teaching at Fitchburg State, to give voice to others.

From the Co-Coordinator, Eric Budd and Elise Takehana

While the campus has certainly felt more empty than we're accustomed (and hopefully we're not getting to comfortable with that!), the CFS has had a busy year behind the scenes working on new initiatives for the upcoming year. Though we've continued with our Speaker Series, guest lecture, April colloquium, and faculty-student research grants, we'd like to take a moment to preview a few exciting developments.

First, we're very happy to offer for the first time a Research Summer Camp to faculty who applied. For so many, COVID-19 meant a long pause from our work as researchers, so we thought it a fun idea to provide a space for many to come together to plan and prepare for a summer of research.

Now that we're finishing up our third year as Co-Coordinator, we are also recalibrating some of our goals and budgetary priorities. We want to make the faculty research on campus a noticeable presence to our students by sharing our

work with them. While the May Development Day has seen wonderful revisions that really celebrate the faculty, it happens after students leave campus for the year. We would like to prioritize sharing that work during the academic year so students can attend as well.

We are also continuing to work with Academic Affairs to enhance support for developing a culture around research and bringing students into that conversation, not only to find more ways to include students in that research but to also help students see the inherent value of the research faculty do and how that enhances their teaching. Students benefit from faculty whose research receive support.

Finally, we look forward to many more socially oriented CFS events in the coming year. While the Delta and Omicron variants forced us to cancel plans for more socially-oriented discussion-based events on and off campus, we look forward to reigniting that work for Fall 2022.

While this academic year has been another challenging one, we're ever hopeful for brighter days ahead.



3rd Annual Faculty Research Colloquium to Focus on Data in Health

On Wednesday, April 27th, from 3:30-5:00 pm, the Center for Faculty Scholarship will be hosting the 3rd annual Faculty Research Colloquium, "Using Data to Address the Health Challenges of the Future." It will feature presentations of their research by Professors Ben Levy, Tara Mariolis, Dennis Awasabisah, and Michael Hove. This year's colloquium will be held through Google Meets (meet.google.com/uas-ztuw-iyx).

Mathematical models are regularly used to make predictions that inform policy decisions that impact us all. The specific type(s) of data used to parameterize these models can alter predictions and therefore decisions. Ben Levy will outline some of the various forms of data typically used by mathematicians, explain

how they inform different aspects of a model, and dive into a specific application of his own data-informed model related to Covid in South Africa. He will focus on how he obtained the data and made decisions about how to use it to inform a model.

Tara Mariolis will discuss the use of secondary data analysis of electronic health records in substance abuse research. In her recent study, she used a non-experimental, correlational design to examine the relationship between individual counseling status and treatment outcomes in patients receiving buprenorphine for opioid use disorder. She extracted treatment outcome variables (treatment utilization, medication use, and opioid use) from the electronic health records of 669 adults who received

treatment between January 2016 and January 2018. The findings will inform policy and improve the quality of opioid use disorder treatment.

Dennis Awasabisah will highlight some of the efforts undertaken by scientists, government organizations, and stakeholders in the fight to eradicate malaria, which is now known to infect over 241 million people worldwide. After discussing recent scientific data from the literature in this area of malaria research, he will present his own work on the role heme plays in activating antimalarial drugs for drug activity. He will present spectroscopic, X-ray crystallography data, and electrochemical data of compounds that were synthesized here at Fitchburg State University.

Using Data to Address the Health Challenges of the Future

A panel featuring Drs. Dennis Awasabisah, Michael Hove, Ben Levy, and Tara Mariolis

04.27.22
@ 3:30 pm

As Covid-19 has spread globally, its ability to mutate and constantly stay one step ahead of the global response shows how important data is for combatting global health threats. The panelists, who are engaged in research on everything from the AIDs epidemic to malaria, and the opioid epidemic to hearing loss, will discuss how data is used to fight against these health issues, the challenges faced in gathering data, and how data can help us address health challenges in the future.

GOOGLE MEET LINK: meet.google.com/uas-ztuw-iyx



Found in Translation

BY ERIC BUDD

This past February, Dr. Rala Diakite and her colleague Matthew Sneider (UMass Dartmouth) published their annotated translation of a 14th-century Florentine chronicle, called *The Eleventh and Twelfth Books of Giovanni Villani's "New Chronicle."* In 2016, they had published their translation of the thirteenth and final book of that same chronicle. They are working their way backward, and are planning on three more volumes to complete the translation of this lengthy text. Dr. Diakite fell in love with the literature of Medieval Italy; the works of Dante, Petrarch, and the early Italian poets continue to captivate her.

Living in the first half of the 14th Century, Giovanni Villani was a Florentine merchant, who held important roles in municipal government. While his lengthy chronicle (in Italian, not Latin) is well known among Italian scholars,

only parts of Books One to Nine have been translated into English. Those selections predominantly dealt with issues of interest to Dante scholars, as Villani discusses many of the same individuals and events as Dante. Books Ten through Thirteen had never been translated, except for short excerpts. However, this material is especially exciting as Villani is describing events of his own day. His text is full of precious facts, figures, and finances of Florence, as well as descriptions of events in Europe, Africa, and Asia, where Florentine merchants traded.

Professors Diakite and Sneider wanted to make Villani's work accessible to more scholars. According to Diakite, "It is so incredibly rich. He took care to document things in great detail." Because he held posts in city government, Villani had access to Florence's financial records, which he incorporated directly into his text. With one brother working in the Papal Court in Avignon, and another at the Court of Naples, Villani had current and reliable information on these centers of power as well.

The final books of Villani's *New Chronicle* are also extremely tumultuous, as Florence experiences a series of challenges. It was a time of floods, constant wars, bank failures, famine, and even the plague. Villani describes the arrival of the plague in Florence in the final pages of Book Thirteen; he discusses a strange new illness people were dying from, and then the book cuts off dramatically. In fact, he himself succumbed to this deadly illness.

Translation is always hard work, but translating a work from



Medieval Italy poses

its own set of challenges. First Diakite and Sneider had to pick a base text for their translation. While they were lucky that there are over a hundred early manuscripts of Villani's work, many of these contained modifications by the copyists. In medieval times, because there was not a strong sense of authorship, people did not hesitate to change words or cut out whole parts of a manuscript based on their particular interests. For this reason, Diakite and Sneider preferred to use a recent critical edition by Giuseppe Porta as their base text. They then had to develop their *modus operandi* for working together. For the first publication, they both translated everything, and then exchanged their translations to blend them together. By the time they started this manuscript, they knew the tone they were looking for, so they just split the text in half and then edited each other's work. According to Dr. Diakite, "We now have a better sense of his style, after 800 pages!"

Since the chronicle was written in Medieval Italian, that also posed challenges. The meanings of certain words have changed. Some terms in the text refer to objects that no longer exist (battle machinery, coinage, measures, clothing, etc.), while others have specific political or sociological meanings given the time in which Villani was writing (names for

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THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH BOOKS OF GIOVANNI VILLANI'S NEW CHRONICLE

Translated from the Italian
by Rala I. Diakité and Matthew T. Sneider



RESEARCH IN MEDIEVAL AND
EARLY MODERN CULTURE

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RESEARCH
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Understanding Our Impact

BY ERIC BUDD

Katherine Hazen brings to Fitchburg State an exciting teaching and research agenda at the crossroads of psychology and criminal justice. As a child, Dr. Hazen was curious about why some people violate norms or rules or act in ways that are outside of what is expected of them. As an undergraduate, she was fortunate to be able to have a series of internships: working in a correctional facility, in a courtroom as a victim-witness advocate, and assisting the New England Innocence Project. Those experiences led her to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, which had created the first joint JD/Ph.D. program in Psychology and Law in the nation.

In her research, Dr. Hazen explores how people experience the criminal justice system. Specifically, she is interested in how can we understand the psychological experience of due process of the law? She examines how due process is experienced from the perspective of both the decision-maker as well as his/her audience. Those decision-makers include police officers patrolling the city streets, as well as judges determining custody of a child, and much more. To do so, she analyzes how our different social identities and past experiences influence how we interpret our interactions with the criminal justice system and the decisions made within it. This interest has led her to examine police-civilian interactions and juvenile courts.

In her analysis of police-civilian interactions, Dr. Hazen draws on the Theory of Procedural Justice, which looks at how people having

decisions made about them evaluate those decisions. For example, if a person gets a traffic ticket, their decision to pay it depends on whether or not they feel that the way they got the ticket was fair. Did the officer listen to my perspective? Did they treat me like a human being who is worth listening to, and did they treat me the same way as they would have treated anybody else? Based on how someone answers those questions, you get a schema, or a notion of fairness, that will determine whether or not they will accept a certain outcome.



While several different disciplines utilize the Theory of Procedural Justice to assess how people evaluate decisions, Dr. Hazen's work attempts to fill a gap in the literature.

Specifically, there has been little work on how the decision-makers themselves perceive their own decisions or those of their fellow decision-makers. As a result, she is interested in exploring how the police officers evaluate police-civilian interactions, and how that compares with the assessments of civilians.

In looking at how people evaluate police-civilian interactions, Dr. Hazen focuses on respect. She compares how the civilians and the police officers assess the degree to which the decision-maker treated the audience of his/her decision with respect and human decency. She finds that civilians tend to be harder on the police officers than the officers are on themselves or their peers. Hazen hypothesizes this is because the officers have a dual identity--- as civilians but also

as officers. This finding led to her interest in Social Identity Theory, and a study of how police officers form their social identity.

One of the things that particularly attracted Hazen to the position teaching Criminal Justice at Fitchburg State was the fact that the Police Academy is attached to the University. Most Police Academies are separate entities, so the future police officers form their identities totally separate from the community. At Fitchburg State, on the other hand, the students at the Police Academy are forming their new identities alongside a future nurse, or teacher, etc., so they are simultaneously forming an identity as a police officer and as a member of the community. Dr. Hazen predicts this will enable them to navigate better their dual identities and to treat the members of the community with respect.

Dr. Hazen's work shows the importance of respect in police-civilian interactions. Recent events such as the murder of George Floyd have led to a heated debate over how to reform the criminal justice system. Some see the problem as being totally with the police, while others assert it is just a few "bad apples" within the police that are the source of the problem. For Hazen, change will only come if the state takes responsibility and models best practices. Authority figures---whether they are government officials, judges, police officers, professors in the classroom, etc.--- must treat the subjects of their decisions with respect, and appreciate how those decisions can be assessed very differently depending on someone's social identity or past experiences. Lying at the crossroads of Psychology and Law, Dr. Hazen's research can help to shed light on lots of our societal problems.

Tip for Writing a Special Projects Grant Application

Special Project Grants are funded by the Provost's office, but the Center for Faculty Scholarship's Advisory Board reviews and recommends those applications. While the applications are brief, they are competitive, so we'll share a few tips here from our years of reviewing them.

1: MAKE THE BUDGET AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE

It's quite hard to fund projects when it's unclear how the money will be used. Try to itemize discrete costs. This becomes especially beneficial to applicants when it's not possible to fully fund a grant request but the board wants to support as much of the request as they're able. While we are aware how limited department budgets and continuing scholarship funds are, reviewers still appreciate knowing that other funding sources were considered. For course release applications, it's helpful to articulate how you will use your time.

2: MAKE THE NATURE OF YOUR WORK CLEAR

When faculty review the applications, they want to be able to clearly see what the applicant(s) will be doing. Sometimes this gets

clouded by what other collaborators or students will be doing. Be sure the responsibilities of each party are clearly articulated. Ultimately, the board is looking to support the research of the FSU faculty member applying for the funding, so it's important to know what they will be doing and how that contributes to their research agenda.

3: WRITE FOR A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY AUDIENCE

The CFS Advisory Board is made up of members from across campus, so if you're using disciplinary jargon, it's harder for members to picture your work and its value. It's in your best interest to write active prose that privileges clarity. Since many board members know little about your specific field, it's also helpful to provide some brief hints at the larger context of your discipline's approach to your research topic so we can place your work in the field.

4: SHOW REVIEWERS YOU ARE READY TO CONDUCT THIS WORK

Since these grants are an investment in a project, reviewers want to see that applicants can explain their project planning and timeline. While you do want to focus on

the current stage of the project, we appreciate hearing a brief description of the history of the project or related projects that show your preparedness to embark on the grant-funded work. It also helps to share a brief picture of anticipated future stages of the work.

5: ARTICULATE THE IMPACT OF YOUR WORK

This last tip is a bit more of a "cherry-on-top" idea. You can certainly get your project funded without this, but it's especially lovely to see applicants share how their research project will connect to other interests. Maybe there is some spillover benefit of the project to how you might teach a course. Perhaps the research contributes to a community need on or off campus.

We've reprinted the names of last year's winner too should you see some friendly names who might be willing to share their experiences with the process.

**Applications
for 2022-2023
Special Project
Grants due on
4.29.21**

2021-2022 Special Projects Grant Winners

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

- EB Caron - Psychological Science
- Elyse Clark - Earth and Geographical Sciences
- Nellipher Lewis Mchenga - Nursing
- Daniel Welsh - Biology and Chemistry
- Eric Williams - Biology and Chemistry

MAJOR GRANTS

- Jessica Alsup - Exercise and Sport Science
- Dennis Awasabisah - Biology and Chemistry
- Elyse Clark - Earth and Geographic Sciences
- Michael Hove - Psychological Science
- Ben Lieberman - Economics, History, and Political Science

MINOR GRANTS

- Katharine Covino - English Studies
- Lisa Grimm - Biology and Chemistry
- Kyle Moody - Communications Media
- Jason Talanian - Exercise and Sport Science

ANTI-RACISM

- Lydnsey Benharris - Education
- Zachary Miner - Sociology

COURSE RELEASES

- DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld - English Studies
- Steven Fiedler - Biology and Chemistry
- Nellipher Lewis Mchenga - Nursing
- Elise Takehana - English Studies

Events

Please send details of events related to faculty research or intellectual life to etakehan@fitchburgstate.edu for inclusion on the Center for Faculty Scholarship's calendar and newsletter.

04 01 22

Deadline

Abstracts for a presentation of your scholarship for the 5th Annual Faculty Symposium at May Development Day are due to academicaffairs@fitchburgstate.edu

04 04 22

12:30 CTL

Prof. Ben Railton shares his talk "Two Sandlots: Baseball, Bigotry, and the Battle for America" as part of the Faculty Speaker Series.

04 27 22

3:30 Google Meet

The CFS's Third Annual Faculty Colloquium features Drs. Dennis Awasabisah, Michael Hove, Ben Levy, and Tara Mariolis, who will present their work on "Using Data to Address the Health Challenges of the Future." Reception to follow.

04 29 21

Deadline

Special Projects Grant applications due today. Please send finished applications to ProvostGrants@fitchburgstate.edu.

05 02 22

12:30 CTL

Prof. Eric Williams shares his talk "Designing Disease-Oriented Student Research Projects" as part of the Faculty Speaker Series.

05 17 22

8:30 Hammond

Faculty present their research with 10-minute talks in the morning. Faculty Awards are announced following a lunch celebrating our colleagues' great work.

06 07 22

9:30 CTL

The CFS Summer Research Camp runs with workshops in support of faculty research planning and community development.

06 08 22

9:30 CTL

The CFS Summer Research Camp runs with workshops in support of faculty research planning and community development.

Faculty-Student Grant Winners for 2021-2022

This spring, the Center for Faculty Scholarship has awarded two \$500 stipends to two students conducting research with a faculty member. Leah Williams is working with Professor EB Caron (Psychological Sciences) on a project entitled "Coaching during Video Feedback in Parent-Child Interaction Therapy." Leah and Dr. Caron look at Parent-Child Interaction Therapy - Emotion Development (PCIT-ED), which has been shown to be efficacious in decreasing depressive symptoms in young children. Specifically, they are looking at how a therapist could use video feedback to help a parent work with their child on handling difficult issues.

The CFS also awarded Jordan Geyster a stipend for her work with Professor Karen Keenan (Exercise and Sports Sciences) on the "Relationship between

Clinical Musculoskeletal Measures and Heel Whip Gait Patterns in Recreational Runners." With the increasing popularity of recreational running, the incidence of running-related musculoskeletal injuries (MSI) has increased as well. While there are several potential risk factors for such injuries, Jordan and Dr. Keenan are exploring whether there could be a connection to heel whip (HW), which is the medial or lateral rotation of the foot in the transverse plane during the swing phase of running.

Both Leah and Jordan will be presenting their work at the Undergraduate Research Conference, so you will be able to learn more about their exciting work. In the future, the CFS hopes to be able to expand its support for faculty-student research projects like these, given the benefits of high-impact practices.

Research Live

[The Center for Faculty Scholarship](#)

Co-Coordinators: Eric Budd and Elise Takehana

If you are interested in having your work featured in *Research Live*, contact Elise Takehana at etakehan@fitchburgstate.edu

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