

Christopher Bass

His Internship Report (June 2006)

I would like to thank the Calcutta Research Group (CRG) for allowing me to work as an intern with the organization. I enjoyed working and discussing with such knowledgeable and passionate "academic activists." As an intern I was fortunate to work under the guidance and support of Dr. Paula Banerjee. It was an honor to work with such an impassioned and dedicated academic. Dr. Banerjee's knowledge and interest in the issue of migration also helped guide my own research.

The opportunity to be an intern with the renowned researchers of the CRG greatly influenced my receiving the competitive Summer Undergraduate Research Funds (SURF) from Millikin University of Illinois, USA, my home institution. Receiving the research funds allowed me to collaborate with my advisor on a comparative analysis on immigration and its representation in American and Indian newsprint. The CRG internship became an essential venue for this continuing research.

My internship with CRG significantly contributed to my research on immigration and media. The CRG library is comprehensive. My access to the organization's collection of periodicals enhanced my understanding of the current situation with immigration in India. Of particular benefit to me were the articles from the Assam Tribune, The Shillong Times, and other local papers from the northeastern regions of India. Also included in their periodical archive were the major dailies, such as, The Times of India and The Telegraph. The assortment of both local and national newspapers in the CRG collection makes a vast range of opinions on immigration, which vary from region to region, easily accessible for researchers like me. In addition to the research on periodicals, I was also able to use a selection of theoretical and political texts, such as Marshal McLuhan's *Understanding Media*, B. Manna's *Mass Media and Related Laws in India*, Rita Manchanda's *Media Crossing Borders*, and *The Global Media* by Edward Herman and Robert McChesney. I used these texts as a means to build a contextual base on which to theorize my own thesis. The extensive textual collection yet again made me realize that the CRG is engaged with the most current political discourse. I was able to use their wide selection of texts in researching the issue of how the media intersects with and interprets issues of immigration.

Besides research, my internship involved assisting in various office assignments and participating in the preparatory meeting for CRG's annual winter migration course. The meeting was designed as a venue for the reflection on the course from the previous year and also as space for the discussions about the necessary improvements for the upcoming 2006 winter program. I was impressed to see how well the CRG embodies the John Dewey model of "action-reflection-action" in everything that they do. My responsibilities for the meeting were to welcome and register the notable guests as well as take the minutes of the suggestions and comments offered during the meeting. Working with these various assignments allowed me to interact with academics from all over the globe. I was honored to meet the representatives from the embassy of Finland, academics from the northeastern regions of India, and professors and publishers from New Delhi. Although I was impressed with the overall academic discourse of the meeting one particular suggestion, which generated much discussion, stands out in my memory. It is a suggestion that is a strong evidence of CRG's commitment to students from every continent of the globe. It was argued that additional efforts would be made to provide students from economically depressed nations with the opportunity to attend the course-particularly students from Africa. For me, this discussion highlighted CRG's passion for teaching beyond the limits of one nation or continent, thus proving that their course is not restricted by borders and boundaries.

On my return to the United States, my research continues, and its success is indebted to my exceptional experience with the CRG. I hope to remain in contact with the members of CRG. The organization was a gracious host for me in India, and I am hopeful for a future association and/or collaboration with the group.