DEAN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
STUDENT VENTURE GRANT APPLICATION

Please read all instructions and regulations on the reverse side of this sheet prior to the completion of this form. The 8 copies of your proposal are due in the Dean's Office on the 2nd Friday of the Block by 1:00 p.m. If you have questions, please contact Rita Zook at x6686 or email rzook@coloradocollege.edu.

DATE SUBMITTED February 4, 2011

NAME ___________________ CLASS __ WORKER BOX 809 EXT. ________

ID # ___________________ HOMETOWN (Not Address) _____________________

NAME ___________________ CLASS __ WORKER BOX ______ EXT. ________

ID # ___________________ HOMETOWN (Not Address) _____________________

STUDENT RESEARCH √ LIFE OF THE MIND _______ CONFERENCE _______

PROJECT TITLE Understanding la Purga: An examination of the behavior of Semana de Santa spectators in Seville, Spain

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF INTENDED USE OF FUNDS
I plan to conduct an independent, ethnographic sociological study of the behavior of the crowds that assemble to watch the world-renown processions of Semana de Santa, or Holy Week, in Seville.

PROPOSED DATE/BLOCK OF USE April 17-24, 2011 (Block 7)

NAME OF FACULTY SPONSOR ______________________ Sandi Wong

HAVE YOU BEEN THE RECIPIENT OF A PREVIOUS VENTURE GRANT Yes ___ No √

IF SO, WHAT AMOUNT? _______ WHEN? _____ REPORT SUBMITTED? _______

TOTAL AMOUNT OF VENTURE FUNDS NOW REQUESTED $1000

ARE YOU SEEKING OTHER FUNDING FOR THIS PROPOSAL? Yes ___ No

IF YES, WHAT IS THE SOURCE? President's Special Projects Fund

If this proposal is approved, I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the Dean's Office immediately if I do not pursue my project as proposed to the Dean's Advisory Committee. I further understand that all funds are to be used according to the proposal as submitted and approved by the Dean's Advisory Committee. Any changes to an approved project must be submitted to the Chair of the Committee for approval. Please note: the IRS requires that we report Venture Funds as taxable income.

SIGNATURE ______________________ DATE February 4, 2011
Understanding la Bulla:
An examination of the behavior of Semana de Santa spectators in Seville, Spain

I plan to conduct an independent, qualitative sociological study in Seville, Andalucia, Spain during Semana de Santa, or Holy Week, which takes place this year from April 17th to the 24th. Seville is famous for the spectacularly elaborate processions and celebrations that take place annually in its streets.

Background Information
As a Sociology major, I am interested in the behavior of the crowds of up to a million people that amass to watch the Semana Santa processions. The website Turismo de Sevilla reports that, “according to experts,” the agglomeration of people, called la bulla in Spanish, “differs from common crowds in that during this phenomenon certain norms of behavior are maintained. Usually, during the crowds of Holy Week people breathe a certain ambience of behavior, understood amongst all, while rejecting any abrupt or selfish attitudes.”

This remarkably restrained collective behavior contrasts with the disorderly, rowdy behavior of crowds of spectators at another world-famous Spanish festival—the running of the bulls. Interestingly, this annual festival, too, has a religious ties; it originated as a festival to honor Saint Fermin.

My main question is: why do the crowds of spectators at Semana de Santa in Seville behave as they reportedly do? But to answer this question, others must be asked, too. What cultural factors are at play? In particular, how strongly is crowd behavior tied to the religious nature of this particular festival? How do individual interactions between spectators—both tourists and natives—affect the behavior of la bulla as an entity? What does the “certain ambience of behavior” of la bulla look, sound, smell, and feel like? Where did the norms of behavior originate, and how—and by whom—are they enforced?

The Academic Venture
In 1957, Herbert Blumer, a prominent twentieth century sociologist who studied collective behavior, said, “Sociologists had done a rather miserable job in studying the crowd systematically because they had done little to assemble empirical accounts.” Since then numerous studies of crowd behavior have emerged out of the fields of sociology and social psychology. Today, the existent research on collective behavior is relatively extensive; it provides a broad, solid foundation from which to launch my own investigation. As a part of my independent study, I will spend the first three weeks of seventh block conducting a literature review—reading as many relevant studies and theories about collective behavior as possible (see attached reading list).

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I have chosen an area of study that is suited both to my position as an undergraduate sociology student and to my specific academic interests. As Gary T. Marx and Douglas McAdam, write of collective behavior,

"For the undergraduate liberal arts student, the field's theoretical, empirical and cross-disciplinary breadth is a decided advantage. It is an ideal area within which to examine basic...theoretical perspectives on group life. The empirical data force us to confront process and structure, change and stability, conflict and cooperation and the micro and the macro levels of analysis."^2

The questions that I am posing have not yet been raised with regard to *la bulla*. They are also questions that cannot be answered from a distance. So, through participant observation, I hope to gain an understanding of the "norms of behavior...maintained" in Seville during *Semana Santa*, as well as how, and why, they come about. Answers to these questions will hopefully illustrate what I am particularly interested exploring: the idea that there is a significant relationship between the socially constructed meaning ascribed to a given environment and an individual’s behavior and understanding of his or her self within this context.

I view the opportunity to pursue this research as a valuable heuristic experience afforded by my education at Colorado College—experiential education that is a part of the “unique intellectual adventure.” It is my hope that this independent study of *la bulla* will enable me to contribute to the sociology subfield of collective behavior and social control. In addition, I look forward to contributing to the Colorado College community both by giving a presentation about my experiences in Seville and by making my findings available to anyone who finds them to be of interest. Also, I will pursue the opportunity to write an article about Holy Week in Seville for *The Catalyst*, thereby sharing my knowledge of this slice of Spanish culture with Colorado College students who have not experienced it first-hand.

**Relevant Academic Experience**

I feel that I am well-equipped to take on the academic challenge of this venture. During the Fall 2010 semester, I successfully completed SO302: Qualitative Research Design. The class involved an independent project on a scale similar to the one that I am proposing here, giving me the chance to acquire the skills necessary to conduct valid qualitative sociological research and synthesize my findings in the form of a paper. If given the opportunity by the Dean’s Advisory Committee to conduct an independent study project in Seville, I will further hone my skills in gathering and analyzing qualitative data—something that will be especially valuable as I prepare to write a qualitative senior thesis in sociology.

Other sociology courses I have taken that have prepared me for this endeavor are: the Sociology of Everyday Life, Sociological Research Design, Political Sociology, the Sociology of Religion, and Social Theory. These courses have exposed me to both the

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micro- and macro- (and in-between) perspectives in sociology and have developed my ability to recognize patterns and trends in and across human behavior and societies.

In addition, I took a journalism course, Investigative Reporting, in which I was taught many valuable lessons for conducting interviews, including: how to approach strangers whom I wish to interview, the importance of giving attention to understated details, and how to record notes while in the field.

Finally, I am excited to immerse myself in Spanish language and culture in Seville. I took four years of International Baccalaureate Spanish language classes in high school, receiving a seven, the highest possible score, on my Spanish I.B. exam. I also traveled in Spain for two weeks when I was sixteen, and so have a basic familiarity with Spanish culture. At CC, my high school experiences have been complimented by my year-long residence in Windom (the Spanish language immersion house), as well as my successful completion of a Spanish adjunct class (Span301: Review of Language with Emphasis on Civilizations and Cultures of the Spanish-speaking Regions).

Methodology

My primary method for this study will be ethnography. More specifically, I will use the method of thick description, which seeks to explain human behavior, its context, and the relationship between the two, ultimately revealing something about the underlying meaning of both the context and the behavior. In addition, I will conduct open-ended interviews when possible. (I have received approval from Colorado College's Institutional Review Board to do so.)

My approach to this study will be inductive. Upon entering the field site, I will observe and record all that I can, identifying patterns, themes, and idiosyncrasies in order to provide a deeply detailed and theoretically rich account of the behavior of la bulla. In order to supplement my field notes, I will use a digital camera with film capability to capture the sights and sounds of Semana Santa in photographs and video footage.

As I briefly mentioned earlier, I plan to gather data through participant-observation. Specifically, this will entail attending as many of the Semana de Santa processions as possible, acting as a researcher and a spectator simultaneously. Literally becoming a part of the crowd, I plan to spend hours on my feet watching the various processions. On certain days of Semana Santa, better-known processions draw larger crowds and so, although I will not physically be able to attend every single procession, I will be certain not to miss the most distinguished ones (see attached itinerary).

In addition, I plan to conduct brief, loosely structured interviews with willing individuals in the crowd, including both sevillanos (natives of Seville) and tourists. Below is a list of questions designed to guide these conversations while still allowing for flexibility in the shape they take. Whenever possible, interviews will be preserved with auditory recordings that I will later transcribe.

Interview Schedule
1. What is your first name?
2. Where are you from?
3. Is this your first time as a spectator of these processions? If not, how many have you seen previously?
4. Can you tell me why you come to these events?
5. What are some other events at which you have been a spectator? How do they compare to being a spectator at Semana de Santa?
6. Do you feel like you are a "member" of the crowd?
7. Do you feel close to other people even if you do not know them personally? Why or why not?
8. What are your expectations and interests as a member of this crowd?
9. Do you think others have the same expectations and interests? Why or why not?
10. Does anyone here know you? How anonymous do you feel as a part of this crowd?
11. How do you feel that you should behave as a part of this crowd? Why?
12. How do you expect other individuals in this crowd to behave? Why? Before ever attending this event, were you told how to behave or what to expect?
13. If you were bothered or upset by someone's behavior in this crowd, what would you do? How might you react?
14. Can you describe how it feels for you to be a spectator at this festival?
Itinerary

Based on schedules of processions from years past and recommendations from the website http://www.seville-traveller.com, I have drafted an itinerary for various processions that I plan to see. The processions are listed by name of the organizing brotherhood, with its year of origin (if known) in parentheses, followed by a place (if known) and time for favorable observation. Any distinguishing facts about a particular brotherhood or its procession are noted in italics.

Domingo de Ramos (Palm Sunday)
• La Paz (1939), from Maria Luisa Park (2:30 pm)
  o The paso, or float, represents the moment when they’re giving Jesus the cross; it’s the first one to go out
• La Amargura, from Iglesia San Juan de la Palma (7:45 pm)
  o Founded in the late 17th century; the virgin of the Amargura was the first Dolorosa, or Virgin Mary, to be crowned, in 1954
• La Hiniesta (1879), from Bustos Tavera (11:30 pm)

Lunes Santo (Monday)
• San Gonzalo (1942), from Triana, at San Jacinto (4:30 pm)
• El Museo (1575) (8:45 pm)
  o Reported to be exemplary of Seville’s “magical” atmosphere
• Vera-Cruz, from Plaza de la Gavidia (11:30 pm)
  o Founded originally in 1448 and revived in the early 20th century

Martes Santo (Tuesday)
• Los Javieres (1946), from Omnium Sanctorum (4:25 pm)
• El Dulce Nombre (1584), from Cardenal Spinola (8:30 pm)
  o This brotherhood is commonly known as the Bofetá (slap in the face) because its paso represents the moment when, after Jesus has been detained, he is slapped in the face by a servant
• San Benito, from Iglesia San Benito (11:55 pm)
  o Founded by shipbuilders in the 16th century

Miercoles Santo (Wednesday)
• Cristo de Burgos, from Plaza San Pedro (7:35 pm)
• La Sed (1979), from Plaza de Pilatos (9 pm)
• La Lanzada (1591), from Cardenal Cervantes (12 am)

Jueves Santo (Thursday)
• Monte-Sión (1560), from La Alameda de Hercules (6 pm)
• La Exaltacion, from La Cuesta del Rosario (8:30 pm)
  o Founded in the 16th century; nicknamed los caballos (the horses)
• La Quinta Angustia (1541), from Doña Guimar (11 pm)

La Madrugada (Friday Morning)
• El Silencio (1340) (1:05 am)
- Considered the oldest existing brotherhood; the whole procession is followed by the watching crowd in silence; the street lights are shut down and the candles illuminate the whole procession
- Jesús del Gran Poder (1431), from El Postigo (4 am)
  - The image in this procession of the Lord carrying the cross is one of the most venerated in Seville
- La Macarena (1595), from Feria (9 am)
  - The procession remains in the streets for 4 hours; it is said to be full of joy and devotion and to arouse passion in the crowds

**Viernes Santo (Friday Afternoon)**
- La Carretería (1550), (4:10 pm)
  - The procession's exit is impressive because of the small size of its chapel as well as the narrow street surrounding it
- El Cachorro (1689), from Triana Bridge (5:30 pm)
- Sagrada Mortaja (1692), from Dueñas (8:30 pm)
  - Very solemn

**Sabado Santo (Saturday)**
- Los Servitas (1696), from Jesus de las Tres Caidas (8:30 pm)
- Santo Entierro (1570), from Plaza Nueva (10 pm)
  - This brotherhood has more representatives of public authorities, civic bodies, and legations than most others
- La Trinidad (1507), (12 am)

**Domingo de Resurreccion (Easter)**
- El Resucitado (1969), from Iglesia de Santa Marina (4:30 am)
Reading List


Expenses

The largest expense for this study is the airfare. As of February 1, 2011 the cheapest available round-trip flight from Denver to Seville is $1197.49. Thus I am requesting $1000 in Venture Grant funding, and am applying for funding from the President’s Special Projects Fund to cover the remainder of the logistical costs for my study. This includes the cost of staying in a hostel in Seville for the week—eight nights at approximately $50 per night for a total of $399.67. I am planning to cover the costs of any other expenses using my personal financial resources.

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