Welcome to the Atlas!

Dear Readers,

As recent returnees, we enjoyed Foreign Study and felt it was a valuable opportunity to gain insight about other cultures, our own country and ourselves. Although F.S. can be a difficult time, hindsight shows it to be worth more than a stolen beer stein, a cheap metal statue of the Eiffel Tower, a telephone sign in Spanish, a bad case of diarrhea, and being slung with camel spit. We came back with much more.

We appreciate the time and effort our peers took to capture their experiences on paper and to sort through scrap books. We would like to apologize for our constant nagging. Even though we studied in France and Spain, through your submissions we traveled around the globe.

Every experience abroad is unique and this magazine offers only a glimpse of what is ahead, behind and what just passed by your window. We have included a brief bibliography about each contributor to give you an idea of who studies abroad.

We would also like to thank our families and friends who have given us much support over the last quarter and a half.

Many Thanks,

The Editors

Christopher Gale is a rising senior English major. He is also an editorial assistant for Passages North and hopes to pursue an M.F.A. in poetry after graduation. Chris studied in Madrid, Spain for F.S.

Anne Molineu, K ’93, is a Political Science major who did her six month F.S. in Clermont-Ferrand, France. Having a special interest in French politics, she especially enjoyed living in Vichy, home to Pétain’s government during W.W.II.

Kim Plaxton, K ’93, is studying romance languages and is interested in bilingual education and publishing. Although she was in Caen, France for F.S., she would like to have a similar experience in a Spanish-speaking country.

Amy Schlosser is pursuing an English major, a concentration in French and an Education certificate at K. She plans to become a teacher in the secondary school system after graduation. Amy spent her F.S. in Clermont-Ferrand, France.
In This Issue...

Introduction: 1
Welcome to the Atlas!, the Editorial Board

Looking Back on Thirty Years of Foreign Study: 4
An Interview with Dr. Joe Fugate, Anne Molineu

Foreign Study Poetry: 6
Things I Took, Jill Thompson
Walking Alone, Amy Schlosser

Scotland: 7
can na h-alba, Jennie Laird
The Sea is Always There, Sara Ranger
In the Blue Lamp, Jennie Laird

Germany: 10
From "Reflections on Erlangen," Tracie Palmer
The Same Sweater, Carter Dougherty

Ecuador: 12
Journals from Quito, Michelle Murray
Otavalo, market town, Jennifer Prickett

France: 18
Climbing the Puy, Meena Moossavi
Les Américains découvrent la pétanque
Vichy, France: First impressions from across the sea, Anne Molineu

Italy: 21
Excerpts from “Patterns,” Chris Matthews
Termine, Rome, Chris Matthews
Africa and Greece: 24
Ski-holders and Christmas near the Equator, Chris Wozniak
Aegina, Theresa Braunschneider

Peoples Republic of China: 26
One Day in China, J. Tobin Rothlein

Russia: 30
Notes from Bokzal, Laura Miller

England: 31
In the footsteps of The Wife of Bath, Rebecca Hobson

Mexico: 32
Let’s Make A Deal, Robin Kendall Willard

Host Families: 33
La Dueña de mi destino, Jessica Parker
“Expect the Unexpected,” Christopher Knorr

Carribean: 36
El Merengue, Heidi Early
Escape to Cuba, Heidi Early

Foreign Study in Kalamazoo: 38
Truth or Dare, Lars Reppesgaard

Traveling: 39
“An Experience Not Soon Forgotten,” Ron Whitney
Far Off The Tourist Path, Jason Bull and Jan Williams
Getting to London, John Purrenhage
Carnival Time in Venice, Anne Molineu

Photo Contributors: 48
Looking Back on Thirty Years of Foreign Study

An interview with Dr. Joe Fugate

By Anne Molineu

After almost thirty years of experience, Dr. Joe Fugate will step down from his position as the Director of the Foreign Study Program in October, 1992. The Foreign Study program began in its existing form in 1962 with Dr. Richard Stavig when faculty members would spend the year at an overseas base supervising a program. Fugate spent 1963/1964 in Bonn and Muenster. He accepted the position as director in 1974.

The program has been in a constant state of “flux and flow” according to Fugate. In 1962, Foreign Study consisted of centers in France, Germany, Sierra Leone, Ecuador and Turkey. Most of these original programs are still in effect today with the exception of Turkey and Ecuador, which ended due to political and safety reasons; however, the program in Ecuador was revived in a new center in 1991. Fugate notes that changing student interests have also played a role in the changing of centers. For example, one center, specifically for science students, was dropped due to lack of interest. With the addition of Japanese and Chinese to K’s curriculum, more students have taken interest in the centers in Japan and China.

Fugate also recognizes that student attitudes have changed significantly over the years. In the beginning, a relatively small number of students had had previous overseas experiences. Their Foreign Study opportunity was much more exceptional. Nowadays, more K students have already been abroad and tend to take the program for granted. Travelling tends to overshadow the university experience. “There is a certain mythology that says one does not have to work overseas,” said Fugate.

As everyone knows, foreign study is not complete without some mishaps, and Fugate has quite a few tales to tell. For him, it is difficult to choose just one as his favorite. He did, however, relate two stories that occurred while students were still travelling to Europe by steamship. On one trip, a passenger went overboard, and because almost half of the ship’s passengers were K students, Dr. Fugate, Dr. Stavig and the group leaders frantically counted heads. Luckily, everyone was still there. Another “ship episode” happened during one of Fugate’s return trips. The ship crunched into a pier at St. Johns, Newfoundland and punctured its hull.

Looking to the future, Fugate realizes the dangers of “playing prophet.” He hopes that K will maintain a strong Foreign Study program, increase the number of participants overall and especially the number going to the less popular programs, such as those in Africa.

Fugate also recognizes roadblocks and complications with the system. By the end of the decade, it will be harder to house students with families. Foreign universities have limited space, especially for American students. In addition, the ever changing world scene constantly affects the program.

Looking back, Fugate calls his time in the program a “mixed experience.” “It has been a time-demanding position and my family has put up with a lot.” It has also been an “extremely rewarding time,” for he has seen what Foreign Study has meant to two generations of students.

In leaving, Fugate offers some advice to his successors. He feels that the personal dimension of the program is extremely important. During his thirty years, Fugate has established lasting personal contacts vital to K’s program. “K has been blessed with loyal colleagues and friends for some thirty or more years. We owe them a great debt,” said Fugate.

Details are also important in the functioning of the program. As Fugate points out, “The operation stands or falls in direct proportion to how you handle details.”

In conclusion, Fugate states that one cannot take the program for granted—“What has been built up over years could fall apart very quickly.”

After a one-year sabbatical, Dr. Fugate will resume a full-time position in the German Department. The staff of the Atlas would like to recognize all the work Dr. Fugate has done to get K’s Foreign Study program known worldwide. Because of him, many K students have had valuable overseas experiences. Thank you.

This interview was conducted by Anne Molineu and Christopher Gale.
An Ecuadorian street musician, Quito, Ecuador.
Things I Took

By Jill Thompson

Shells from the beaches
coins from foreign lands
A cancelled stamp of a man
punched museum tickets
subway passes
train schedules

Too many pictures
from the Eiffel Tower

pamphlets in Portugese
a candybar wrapper
The beer bottle label
handout calendars
a Czech magazine
a lost pin

And much more,
...light as those things were.

After spending six months in
Madrid, Jill Thompson, K '93,
has returned to K and continues
to persue a Chemistry major.

Walking Alone

By Amy Schlosser

Some days I think that I'm not going
to make it.
There is no place to hide where
I'm not found.
Sometimes I hide in my room, but
I'm reminded of everyone
I took for granted and everything
at home.
How will I make it? I ask myself.
The only answer is to take one step at a time.
I feel like a baby learning to walk.
When I came I could crawl, and now
I'm taking my first steps.
Each day I fall, but I can take
one more step.
Maybe when February comes, I'll have
fallen enough that
I won't fall. I won't want to hide, and
I'll be able to walk alone.
"The Language of Scotland"

Calanish Standing Stones, Lewis, Scotland

by Christine Olah

Photo by Christine Olah

Canan na h-alba
the language of scotland

By Jennie Laird

to woo me, my lover whispers
'the sheep are beautiful in the sun.'
not in english, of course, for i require
the artistry of ancient tongues.
to woo me, he thinks back and imagines
himself a young scottish peasant boy
skiving off school for an afternoon to study
the lass who intrigues him so, to watch me
perched at the foot of a cnoc, on the ridge
of a monadh or the rails of a droaid,
as he watches he thinks carefully then says
'tha na caoran breagha anns a' ghrian'
to the north sea wind and it listens, it carries
the words to me by my hill or my moor or
my bridge, and there i listen, pausing to
look up from my papers and books and ink-
stained hands. he's a confused lad who
wonders why i am always writing, always
staring out from my perch, my gaze at nothing
and everything all at once. he woos me, because
that same wind tells him that we will grow up,
be forced to learn english. in our later years we
will struggle to remember the verbs and the idioms,
we will struggle to teach the dying gaelic to our
children because we know if it dies something
bigger dies, too. to woo me, my lover thinks back
and imagines that he must remember what these words
mean, as well as love how they sound.
The Sea Is Always There

By Sara Ranger

In the backs of my nostrils the sea is always there, scenting me like a golden retriever and I follow the lines in my hand to the beach. Sometimes when I am sitting, reading a book or eating my fourth piece of toast I need to put on a sweatshirt, my binoculars and walk. The sea knows I am coming because it has called me and once I woke up before I got there and turned around, not even getting far enough to feel the sand beneath my rubber grip soles. Other times it put a camera in my hand and took wonderful pictures while I stood stupified, hearing the waves far away in another world.

The oil rigs were always there, waiting just a little ways off shore, sending out their filthy bilge, the sailors throwing garbage off the starboard bow. The beach hated them and made me throw rocks and curse them at the top of my voice, especially when the moon was a thin crescent above, the wind whistling in the stars.

For weeks I would stay home, only catching a glimpse of the sea from the top deck of the number 20 bus, but then it would catch me again in its soft, sweeping nets and drag me painlessly toward shore. I made excuses along the way, stopping to look for the heron or the swans, or walking the long way around instead of following the hypnotic curves of the river. Somehow, except for that one time, I always ended up there, not even detained at the pub or pausing to look both ways when crossing the street, darting between the tiny cars that could not dent my fluid body as I raced toward the sea.

For me, the sea is always there.
I wavered a bit when I leaned across the table, around drained pint glasses and perfect cider rings. I leaned too close and I knew it, but to prove my point I took his hand and said Listen. Hills and castles and all the pubs in the world don't matter in the end. It's this. And I held our hands up as exhibits A and B, clasped together despite themselves, in the end it's just this.
From "Reflections on Erlangen"

By Tracie Dominique Palmer

Alberts Kaffee Haus, Fahrradvergnügen and Kein Blut für Öl...these are the first things that come to mind when I am asked to remember my foreign study experience. But no—the six months that I spent in Erlangen, Germany over a year ago meant so much more than that. The best word to sum up the many experiences that I had there would definitely be surreal. With this in mind, I offer my reflections on Erlangen.

1. It is Christmas eve and I have just found out that my host brother will be spending Christmas with the family and that I really should get him a gift. Eric and I catch a bus downtown and everything is closed except for the florist and McDonald's so we end up spending far too much money on a miniature fir tree in a pot that we take over to McDonald's and decorate with french-fry forks, Happy Meal accessories and a swatch of wrapping paper that we found on the street—it is really quite a sight when we get done with it. And then my host brother, who is a college student in Northern Ireland, is forced to act diplomatic about the whole thing on Christmas morning, telling us what an Umweltfreundlich gift it is.

2. It is cold. I just spent six hours in the Nürnberg Bahnhof waiting for the first commuter train home. You see, I went to the Anthrax/Iron Maiden concert in Würzburg that evening, and I was trapped in a very cold, very closed train station with four army men that I had met at the concert. I didn’t have any change to pay for a toilet. Once I got on the train, I had to try and stay awake so that I didn’t miss my stop. It was a good thing that they hadn’t heated up the cars yet. I am the only one on the first bus going to Uttenreuth, but neither the driver nor I are awake enough to carry on a conversation. I am home. I slide the key into the front lock slowly, thinking that speed directly affects the amount of noise that is made. But the door is opening already. Constance, my nine-year-old host sister, is standing, searching. "Why?" I ask, confused. "I am looking for my boots." It was St. Nicholas morning.

Photo submitted by Sharon Bachman and Rene Coleman do lunch after deep snow hiking in Garmisch Partikian, Germany. Both Sharon and Rene studied in Erlangen.
3. Eating at the Mensa. There’s Herbert: Oh God! Sure hope he doesn’t see us and come over here and sit down because he mumbles and I can’t understand his German... Hallo Herbert! Ja. Ja. Wie bitte? Wie bitte? Ja, ich weiß auch nicht was zum essen gibt’s. Keine Ahnung. Ja. Silence. Pretend that the food is all of a sudden really interesting.

4. I am helping with props for the Siemens Theatergruppe. It is sleet-snowing as I ride my bike into town that evening. Turns out rehearsal was canceled, but no one remembered to give me a call, unless Constance answered the phone while I was at school. So I go back out to where my bike is parked and see that the tire is low on air. Not wanting to wait an hour for a bus, I figured that I could just ride home slowly. It is still sleet-snowing. The roads are slippery and I am just going down the hill that marks the half-way point to home when my headlight stops working. It is here, in the middle of Bückenhof, that I stop to wonder just exactly what the purpose of my life is.

5. It is 6 March 1991. I have been in the United States for one night. People get frustrated with Trade Dominique Palmer, K’92, me when I stare at everything for too long. They can’t understand why I am unable to tell them if I had a good time in less than a few minutes.

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**The Same Sweater**

*By Carter Dougherty*

An old lady sits on a bench in Marx-Engels Platz
Knitting a sweater
At the rate she’s going, she’s probably been knitting
The same sweater
For two years
In two years...
   Berlin’s scar disappeared
   And the Ossies married the Wessies
For two years...
She kept her bench warm,
Observing the platz daily,
With the same company.
She has her routine.
Is the world really changing so quickly?
Well, she’ll finish that sweater someday.
Journals from Quito

By Michelle Murray

At risk of sounding like a sugar-sweet testimony to the joys of foreign study, I’d say that the six month period I was in Quito, Ecuador was one of the best experiences of my life. Not only did I get to live, study(?), and travel in a foreign place but I also got to bond with Fernando Sr., Clarita, Rocio, Fernando Jr. and Carolina Yépez—the members of the Ecuadorian host family which took me in, introduced me to their lifestyle, overlooked my cultural blunders and loved me like a daughter. I’ve selected a few excerpts from the journal I kept while I was in Ecuador. I’ve left out a lot—the bad, the bawdy, the overly personal—but it gives a glimpse of my experience as cultural student and spectator.

November 2, Día de los difuntos

This morning I went with Clarita to the crypt of La Dolorosa, my host family’s church. One of Clarita’s favorite nephews was a famous photographer and mountain climber and he died a few years ago on an expedition in the Andes. The crypt was huge and impressive and was filled with people coming to remember their deceased family members. I walked up and down the long, damp aisles watching people clean the marble nameplates and decorate them with new artificial flowers as they cried, prayed, talked to the dead. I looked at the photos, cards and poems that had been taped to the markers, and I realized that you have only lived if you are remembered. It is so different here than any other holiday at home. Memorial Day, for so many people in the U.S., means just another day off from work. We are so future-oriented—when someone dies we grieve, then try to forget it and get on with our lives. Here they possess a deep respect for the past and for those who have lived it. I admire it.

November 18

Thirteen hours on a crowded bus and a painful sunburn seem like a small price to pay for two days in paradise. Lying in a hammock in the tropical sun while the
Pacific breeze blows over the sand with a pina colada that resembles a work of art in my hand, it's hard to believe I haven't walked onto the set of Fantasy Island. We found a hotel room on the beach for about two dollars a night and have feasted on fresh shrimp and coconut all weekend. I remember my friends in Europe who are freezing in bus stations and scraping together enough money to split a cup of coffee and bread, and I do sincerely try to feel sympathy for them.

December 16

Yesterday, Clarita, Carolina and I went on a Christmas tree hunt. We drove up and down 6 de diciembre until we found a place with a good selection of pines. I'm excited to spend the holiday in Quito with my great Ecuadorian family, but I'm also a little bit homesick for my family, friends, and snow. All it takes is a Marlboro commercial that shows a snowy scene to get me yearning for a Michigan winter. My host brother Fernando keeps teasing me by saying they are predicting a white Christmas in Quito. I doubt it.

February 1

Yesterday I turned 21 and it was a great birthday. A group of us went to a restaurant called La Ronda for dinner. It's this huge place, totally geared toward gringo tourists. The place's claim to fame is the music—roving "traditional" bands visit the tables and entertain the patrons with tunes. It's all very tacky and lots of fun. When they roamed over to our area the band started singing "Happy Birthday" in Spanish. That song sounds better played on pan flutes, guitars, and charangos than on any other instruments. Right now the family is turning the downstairs into an instant disco for my birthday fiesta. Rocío is putting red bulbs in the light fixtures and moving out all the furniture so there will be a big dance floor for all the merengue and salsa action. Her beau Santiago is setting up his sound equipment and Clarita is baking her famous chocolate cake. My birthday was never this big of an event at home! I'm really touched that everybody is going out of their way to make me feel at home and help me celebrate. Golden rule of dancing for gringos, no matter how many cubalibras you down you will never be able to salsa as well as a five year old. You might as well swallow your dignity, wiggle your hips as best you can and hit the dance floor.

Michelle Murray, K '93, spent six months in Quito, Ecuador. She is an English major.

Saturday market, Otavalo, Ecuador

Photo by Julie Delamarter
Otavalo, market town

By Jennifer Prickett

I can’t tell you how the sun felt. It was scorching me. Looking downhill over the roofs of the shacks I could see the corn field, then the town of Otavalo, many a red roof each protecting some hard-working child from the sun as he knits a wool sweater for market day.

Fernando invites me inside. Eighteen, living at home, plays the guitar, the nephew of Lucinda, do I want a coke? Sure. This must be your family. Con Permiso. I am awkward, standing just inside the doorway with my dangling camera my north-american pale skin and a warm smile. Quick tour of the house. This is grandma, these are my aunts. That’s your son, Ha! Ha! laughs his sister. Brother and sister like any other. Do you want to go and see how we make hammocks? We walk across the dirt floor, step over the cement threshold and out into a courtyard then enter an open room, cement walls, dirt floor, two shafts of light beaming down from holes in the ceiling. Red and gold spun into white entwining in the mammoth machine churning to produce a fine artisan work. Fourteen hours a day his brother works the machine. Productivity: five hammocks a day. Profit: five dollars a hammock. If they sell. Can I take your picture? Okay.

Fernando gets out his guitar and begins to play tinny folk music for me. I play him a James Taylor tune and we laugh at the children who are peeking in the window to see who this guest is that has come to visit. Will you take our picture? I take his grandmother and his sisters outside where the light is sufficient and I direct them to stand in front of the house. Solemn and proud the three of them. I explain some of the intricacies of sufficient and insufficient lighting to them as I focus and

At left: Man looking at bracelets in the market, Otavalo, Ecuador. Below: Fernando’s grandmother and two aunts outside his house, Otavalo, Ecuador.
Fernando's uncle standing in his doorway, Otavalo, Ecuador.

shoot twice. Fernando emerges from the house: Let’s go for a walk through the village and I’ll introduce you to a few more people. Sure.

This is my neighbor. We enter the house; climb a set of wooden stairs and are seated in a room with two chairs and a table. Before long I am looking at old photographs of family reunions, wedding ceremonies, house building, parties, picnics, newborn babies. This is aunt Marie; these were our other neighbors. Looking at me from across the room, the eight-year-old daughter wears a smile that I will never forget. One of clever stillness, quiet knowing. When I take her picture, she looks at me puzzled, uncertain as to whether to fear me or be complimented by my interest in her. The light shining on her face hits the sparkle of promise in her eye. I want to speak to her but do not want to scare her away. Soon we leave.

This is my uncle’s house. He produces wool for all kinds of goods. He does the cleaning, the spinning and the dying of the wool. Such a beautiful slant of light entering from the roof and the doorway, light spilling over wooden tools set aside for the next batch of wool. I admire the craftsmanship, the silence of the adobe, and the gentleness in the man’s demeanor. His scrawny white dog sniffs my feet as we cross to the workshop.

His uncle buys raw wool from the village. Then he cleans it in the river, picking out impurities, then dyes it; then pulls it into long thin, fluffy strips which go onto a spinning machine which makes the thread. He invites us to the back where his wife is cooking pork. We are offered a plate full of roast pork and I am sure that I will die from eating this food, but I accept their hospitality and I cross my fingers. A cat scampers across the dirt floor. I am charmed by the glow of the flame and the voice of the gregarious old woman seated beside her black kettle stirring vigorously.

These impressions are etched in my mind—smell of pork, warmth of the sun on my back, the look in that little girl’s eye, but most of all the joy these people take in everyday life, a life of simplicity, a life without modern technology, a life of family and sincere friendship, true generosity and openness.

I can’t tell you how these people made me feel. The joy they
shared is tormenting me. When they laughed among themselves or smiled as they shared some part of their lives with me, I saw that these people were genuinely happy. And yet they all wanted to come to the United States. I wanted to tell them somehow: don't come here. You have everything you ever needed right inside you. You have something many citizens of the United States will never have: peace of mind.

Hearing them praise my country made me question for myself the value of living here. I took a look around me, and I could not reconcile the irony of their praise. Sad faces in our city streets, people strained under the burden of our tight deadlines, hollowed cheeks from too much suffering, blood on the pavement, injustice in the courts...where is the bliss which we supposedly live in? I am forced to conclude that happiness is an attitude, not a privilege that stems from a particular background.

I look for a day when citizens of the United States can create for themselves this attitude of happiness. I look for a day when their lives are filled with the same spirit of joy in living, the same generosity and sincerity that is so evident in the lives of the people I met in Ecuador. I look for a day when I myself can live daily with the same joy and pleasure of living as the generous souls I met on that sunny day in February.
Vichy, France:
First impressions
By Anne Molineu

20/09/91
Mom and Dad,

Hello! How are you? I am fine. The initial shock is over. Plus, I am still discovering new things and trying to find my way around without my map. I live in a beautiful area. My house is right across the street from a park which sits on a river. My bedroom window opens to the back—other houses and gardens—not too bad. But from the front windows, you can see past the park to the river. Yes, I will take plenty of pictures....Meals aren’t bad. I’ve eaten paté(chicken) every night so far. I’m getting used to the taste. A lot of bread, of course. Then, a variety of things: salads, quiche, pasta, a potato and ham casserole. Everything is good. There is also cheese at the end of dinner. Last night, we had goat cheese. We played a little game to see if I knew what chevre

A statue overlooking one of Vichy’s many gardens.

Les Américains découvrent la pétanque

Comment dit-on «pétanque» en américain? Très certainement «pétanque», en mettant l’accent!

Quoi qu’il en soit, 17 étudiants(tes) du «Kalamazoo College» de la ville de Kalamazoo, dans l’État du Michigan, se sont initiés, mercredi, sur le clos des Célestins, à ce sport national avec les membres de Vichy-Pétanque et leur président, M. René DuCroizet. Ils ont disputé un concours amical avec leurs «professeurs» d’un jour avant le pot de l’amitié.

Arrivés dans la situation, le 17 septembre, ces jeunes gens se perfectionnent dans l’étude de notre langue, au CAVILAM, et de la civilisation française. Outre leur initiation à la pétanque, ils auront aussi visité les châteaux de la Loire, assisté à la fabrication du pain chez M. Petit, et suivront même une audience du tribunal de grande instance à Cusset.

A la fin de leur séjour vichyssois, ces étudiants continueront leurs études à l’université de Clermont-Ferrand ou de Caen.

Dimanche après-midi, Vichy-pétanque présentera les «trophées Le Célestin», concours ouvert à tous les licenciés et membres honoraires du club, les inscriptions sont reçues jusqu’au samedi midi, dernier délai.

«Les Américains découvrent le pétanque» appeared in La Montagne, the Auvergne regional newspaper. Vichy is part of the Auvergne region located in central France and hosts "K" students during Foreign Study.

La découverte de la pétanque pour les jeunes Américains de Kalamazoo avec les pétanquers locaux et Mme Plancke, responsable de leur groupe au CAVILAM.
sent home from across the sea

was—it is French for goat! ... Yesterday, I broke my key in the lock of the door. Yes, something I don’t even do at home! I had to explain what happened in French, of course. Benoit, my host brother, took the entire lock apart and fixed it. I’m glad they didn’t have to call a locksmith, I felt so bad about that! ... Vichy is a beautiful city. I miss you!!!! Tell grandma hello. I hope she is feeling better! Give Doug my best.

Love, Anne

03/10/91
Dear Mom and Dad,

Bonjour! How are you? It was nice to talk to you on the phone the other night. I feel like I am so far away—even in a different time warp sometimes—so it is nice to call. Although I’d like to talk for a long time to catch up on everything, I know that I can’t do that! ... Today was absolutely beautiful. I finally took some time this afternoon to walk in the park across the street from my house. I sat along the river and watched the people pass. There are so many dogs here and most of them do not have leashes. Dogs have it so well here; they go everywhere: restaurants, grocery stores, etc... everywhere. Of course, there is also a lot of dog shit everywhere—so you have to watch where you walk ALL THE TIME!!!! Oh, yesterday, I did something very interesting. I played pétanque with a bunch of old men at a club down by the river. CAVILAM arranged the whole thing for our group. It was great! It’s played with two teams of three and each person has two boules (steel balls a little bigger than a baseball). First, you throw out a petit (a small ball the size of a large marble). It has to go about six meters from where you stand. (It’s something like horseshoes in terms of rules and goals, and the fact that you often see old men playing.) Imagine, if you would, 15 American students, age 20-21, attempting to play this game with these old men who talk to us in French as if we were two-years-old. Really amusing!!!! Well, my hand hurts. Write me soon with lots of news!! Miss you!! Love you!! Say hi to everyone!!

Love, Anne
Climbing the Puy

By Meena Moossavi

We had a quest for that Sunday: climb the Puy-de-Dôme. Sara and I were kind of lazy about getting up that morning. If we were going to walk the entire way, we’d be in trouble. Sara asked Mme. Maucouts, her host mother, how to get to there, and luckily she said they would drive us to the foot of the volcano. I went home to get ready for the journey and came back warmly dressed. We were supposed to get ourselves back home, so she gave us all sorts of directions. By pooling all our change together, we had three francs worth of centimes, so we were planning to take the bus back for free.

The car stopped in the middle of a forest, then the Maucouts ran off in their sweatsuits in a full sprint. On the other hand, we only walked 20 minutes before we stopped for our first lunch break. I felt incredibly exhausted and hot wearing long johns, wool pants, an undershirt, a turtle neck, a sweater, a winter coat, a scarf, gloves and heavy boots. It wasn’t cold at all, even with all the snow! I felt much better after taking my coat off and eating. The sky was pure blue and crystal clear—a perfect day to go volcano hiking.

Finally, we started climbing the small volcano that led to the real Puy-de-Dôme. It was half snow-covered, dotted with small bushes and looked like tundra. We started telling each other stories to distract us from the strenuous going. Spontaneously, I made up a story about us going on Foreign Study and it ended with a big, bad, evil host mother. It wasn’t very difficult to make up. We stopped a lot to rest since the air became thinner in the higher altitude. As we got higher and higher, we could see the surrounding volcanos that were veiled in white mists. I didn’t feel like I was in France anymore—I had a strange sensation of being in China. We took pictures, knowing that our cameras could never really capture the sweeping view. All of a sudden, we could see the towering Puy. We struggled upward and onward, slipping and falling a lot on the icy path.

When we finally reached the top, we found a brand new restaurant perched on the summit of the savage volcano, right next to the ancient Roman temple dedicated to Mars. We sat down, finished off our sandwiches, tangerines, water and finally, the chocolate bar Marcus had given me. It was very peaceful and quiet in the cold sunlight. Men were gliding through the air on their paraponts, and I waved to one that swung really close to us. After staying an hour, we slipped down the icy trail, and luckily found the wooded path that led back to civilization.

It was 5:30 p.m., and we were starting to worry about getting home. It would take hours. We were heading towards Clermont on a deserted country road with no lights. I tentatively stuck my thumb out and of course the occasional car that drove past ignored me in the growing twilight. In desperation, I started walking backwards with my arm sticking out broadly and a big smile. Thinking no one would take us seriously, the first car that saw us screeched to a halt! It was a middle-aged man in a slick car, and he was heading towards Clermont-Ferrand. We hopped in, and Sara squeezed my arm. I did all the talking, and he seemed really nice. Even so, I kept looking at all the roads he took with suspicion, expecting him to turn any moment off the road and murder us.

He was going to drop us off at the cathedral, but he let us off in the center of town, the minute it came into sight. We stepped out of the heated car into the bracing cold and glittering lights of the square and we were caught up in the whirling masses of people. We were bursting with excitement about what we had just done as we approached the Christmas tree.

Meena Moossavi, K ’93, is a Biology major. She studied in Clermont-Ferrand for six months. Meena will be researching Molecular Genetics at the University of Liège in Belgium in the Winter of 1993.
Do not be alarmed. This is not an invasion, contrary to what the shortness of our shorts might say about us. In our country, showing a bit of thigh is a sign of friendship, a welcome, a light in the window. We have come to exchange alternatives—we have smuggled ours in the stuffed seams of our suitcases, wheeling them along inside long coats that cover us like tents. Now we gather round each other and hand out our oddities, partly to break the tension the colonizer feels as he tries to feed the first few words of his language to the unconverted. Partly these gifts are learning tools, examples to be followed. What you share with us you wear on your head or on your feet, and we hardly need a private place to exchange such casually displayed gifts.

At night we like to walk down the Via Calzole. I wonder how many times travelers have come here, specifying that they are not here to conquer but to learn, and have seen these shop lights as commentary on the degradation of ancient dignity by greedy modernity. They would have a point, I suppose, except that there’s so many of them making it. But originality is western too. These lights are not particularly original, since everyone has them, although the occasional neon-purple ice cream cone does have a certain charm. The shops repeat up and down the sides of the street, just like a child, who, deciding to write a word with every color of marker available, alternates them for variety’s sake. The man who sells umbrellas wheels his cart here everyday, kicks down a peg that locks the wheels, checks the tape holding the price signs up, and with a violent thrust of his arm, snaps out the seat of his fold-up chair and sits. The street artists have the same kind of chairs, but they unfold them first thing, so they can sit down and carefully unwrap their brushes from cloth, unsnap their boxes, and lay out their paints....

Here, around the cathedral, is a pedestrian zone. They did a T.V. special on it; they filmed the comings and goings of people all day and played back their patterns—you could read it like a chart, seeing lunchtime, five p.m., ten p.m., one a.m., all peak as the area filled. At one time there might be more men here than women, but you could recognize them, even in their exaggerated state of movement. Of course, no one actually moves this way. If you go by at eight in the morning, a man drives a truck across the square, spraying the pavement with water. In his wake, another man sets up a postcard stand, wheels it in, cracks it open and unfolds it. A few business people on their way to work ride through on bicycles, and someone running frantically draws the attention of the large, slow man who opens the cathedral’s tall doors.

If we choose to follow this man, we enter the cathedral. Today the cathedral fills with people who either pray or point to the frescoes, and later pay to descend into the basement and see where the architect is buried. I don’t feel in the mood to assume either role today....

Let’s work our way back out to the street. Usually, because the sun is so striking when you suddenly go into it, you lean against the rail that protects the marbled exterior from bicyclists and grimy hands. There’s always a sense of
getting reacquainted with the buildings, and noticing for the first time that the candy shop is wedged in the base of one of the old castrated towers that line this street. Hundreds of years ago, for added security, rich families in town built towers on their homes. Eventually, every wealthy family wanted or had a tower, and the height of the tower became the most important status symbol. They reached higher and higher, and eventually the skyline of the city wasn’t much of a line at all, but shot up and down like the readings of a bar graph. When the Republic was formed, they ordered all the towers to be cut down, so that the new “palace” of the Republic would be the symbol of strength and unity. Now, the stumps of the towers are scattered throughout the city, and several are along this street.

At night people move up and down the street in different groups that change shape, elongate, bunch up, and slide past each other. Lights come from windows of closed shops and little openings at the tops of towers. One shop sells golden suits for men; a husband and wife stare at their well-dressed selves in the window of the shop, apparently considering the suit in the middle. Another shop has a pyramid of overgrown perfume bottles in their window, and this too throws gold light into the street. Nearby, a store that’s still open sells candy. The tobacco shop is still selling lottery tickets. Between the cafe and the bookstore, a woman sits behind a red table, lighting candles. Behind her table she hangs a large poster of the zodiac signs, and from her dark purple bag she pulls a thick flat deck of cards, like a piece of slate off of which you could pull thinner slices of rock. She is ignored for a few minutes. She unloads a glass ball, places it on the table. A bowl of water; she organizes everything for her business, sliding the ball a foot to the right, the cards to the left, the bowl forward. She shifts the bowl back a little, wiggles the ball a little bit, taps the cards right where they are. Her dress is black, and she has wrapped dark cloth around her head; when she sits behind the table she blends into the brown shadowed bricks behind her. Her eyes still glitter though, and as the potential customer occasionally passes, her lips release, her cheeks push up, and her teeth smile.

Across the street from her a bearded man roasts chestnuts. He has a rickety grill, apparently banged out of beaten metal; he stirs the nuts carefully with a stick. When a customer pays, he snaps open a small white bag, slides one...
scoop of chestnuts inside, and weighs it quickly in his mind. He hands it to the customer. A few feet further down this side of the street, someone is unfolding a table, dropping red cloth on top of it, and lighting candles.

Nearby is a small church. The stone that was decoratively carved now shows the intricacies of the rain water that falls from the spouts. Large circles of colorful terra-cotta have been hung on the outer walls of the church. A more durable material, the flowers still seem blue, and people that step out from the sculpted surface still carry their arms and faces. By the doors of the church, a black man plays a drum. He smiles too, jumping with the rhythms, tossing his head—his loose and bouncing curls giving the crowd something to look at while they listen. His hands are precise and have been trained to cause this much excitement. For him, it is doing this on the street, it is feeling the way the sound of the drum swims around inside the space created by a circle of people in nighttime. People who know nothing about this music dance, and everybody claps. People shout things, and the black man nods his head, as if taking the advice of their enjoyment. There is a worn black hat a few feet away from him, and its constantly being filled, but he never looks in its direction. His arms keep dancing. People feel the taut beats in their chests, something clear and clean about the music, but not antiseptic. Like quietly cutting vegetables for a meal, there is a complete release, nothing muddled or confused, just fragrant and open. With a grand gesture, he strikes the last beat. The circle collapses on him, arms outstretch, voices rise and thank him.

One man, in a long-sleeved white jacket with a high neck, confronts the drum player, puts one hand on his shoulder, and with the other shakes the drummer’s hand. They nod heads to each other, and hold each other’s hand long after they’ve stopped shaking. The man in the white coat has dark skin, and close, curling hair along his jays and on his head. When he turns, I recognize him as Miguel, our “live-in”—the cook and servant of the family I live with. He is Portuguese, and dark. Four years ago he came here on vacation after he split with his wife, and stayed. At the time he didn’t know any Italian, but now that’s the only language we have in common. He has tonight off; you can always find him here when he’s not working, which isn’t very often. If one wants to live, he often says to me when he is cooking, one must work. Miguel, it seems to me, works a lot to live a little. But when I see him here, I usually run into him in a cafe, with a circle of three or four Portuguese women around him, and they all laugh and drink bright orange mixtures. He always pays, and will buy us something too, since he devotes most of his money to entertainment. He turns this way, and we go to meet him. The coat he has on reminds me of the one he wears to serve us dinner, minus the gold buttons....
Ski-holders and Christmas near the Equator

By Chris Wozniak

Wednesday, 6 November, '91

Strange sights, sounds and events continue to pop into our lives at regular intervals here. Yesterday, I needed laundry soap, so I made the trek from one end of town to the other to visit our own Sierra Leonean version of Meijer's: Choithram's. Not surprisingly, even though it was well past lunch hour and not even a holy day (Muslim), they were closed. Anyway, as I was walking back, empty-handed, toward the Cotton Tree at the center of town, a black Isuzu Amigo drove by...not really an unusual sight, except that this one had a roof rack with ski-holders on it?! 10 degrees north of the equator? What the...?! I decided I probably didn't want to know why, smiled and thought about something else.

Another thing: last night as I lay awake in bed, trying to cool off enough to sleep, I was serenaded by the sound of automatic weapon fire drifting up from somewhere in the east end of town, down the mountain. This went on for about 15 minutes, and all I could think of was our advisor telling us that the guards posted around the edges of town (there's a rebel war going on in the east) do that a lot. Shoot, that is. Seems they've found it to be a clever way of checking up on each other: you shoot and see if your buddy a quarter-mile away shoots back, presumably up in the air. Great—that's the general direction we are from town. I thought briefly of the report I had read in one of the local papers about some woman being shot in the butt by a stray bullet while she was sleeping. Hmm...maybe I won't sit so close to the edge of my balcony at night when I'm relaxing and viewing the city.

Wednesday, 25 December, '91

Merry Christmas! Holy cow—What an interesting holiday...we had a nice tour of Djenne (Mali) with Albert, one of those people you just "run into" in West Africa who are more than willing to show you around their hometown. In the middle of wandering around the city we decided that the boat to Mopti (further up in Mali) sounded like a good idea... Inter-

Photo by Chris Wozniak

Spring/Summer 1992
esting—we’ve taken almost every kind of transportation available on this trip: plane; bus; about three kinds of taxis; train; horse-cart; boat. Wow. Anyway, early Christmas Eve day we got into a huge pirogue (like a 60-foot canoe), filled with bags of millet—which we sat on, along with two Germans who were cycling around Mali. We were eventually joined by 20 Dutch teachers and 20 locals, all of us with bags. Amazingly, we had room.

The trip was gorgeous...a few villages here and there along the way, with mud-brick buildings and the occasional mosque...and one hippo lounging in the water. The sunset was amazing: you could see the silhouettes of women walking with baskets on their heads, kids running with the boat along the edge of the bank. As we watched one boy running silently against the sunset, I was struck with the idea that the first Christmas (if you believe in that sort of thing) probably took place in conditions not unlike those around us—like Djenne, preserved today as it was centuries ago. The stars last night were as bright as any Northern Michigan sky, and there was a definite chill in the air. It felt like going back in time 2000 years. The feeling can’t be expressed in words, and you never could have captured it on film, although our natural reaction was: “What a great picture this would be.”

Christopher Wozniak, K’93, is an Economics and English double major. He will probably look for a career in the business field combined with writing. Chris also has a strong desire to see a lot more of the states and the world. He did his foreign study in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Aegina

By Theresa Braunschneider

Here, no coyote dances grinning in the Aztec moonlight, a half-eaten slice of pineapple dripping from his hand.

No brown-skinned woman sits in tress, the humid odor of callas sinking into her pores, flutes and drums calling to her from distances beyond roofs and walls.

Here, only the islands and islands and real cities and real life. Concrete and cheap plastic, dirty bottles and broken salt shakers, crooked salesmen and crooked teeth of a bent old woman dressed in black whom you pass as you run to answer the shout of iron bells across the bay—arriving just in time to see a hundred goats break the line of the hilltop and come charging down its rocky side to meet the sleeping sea which once shook at the hands of terrible Poseidon.

Here, no magic. Only the memories of gods.

Theresa, K’93, is an English major and spent six months in Greece.
"When I graduated from the University of Nanjing, I went to the Northwest of China. I felt I must go to see that old and poor and beautiful land. When I saw the smile on old man’s face, the little child’s bright eyes, the desert with no life, the strong wind and the blue and high sky, little by little I realize what I really want to be. It’s poor but it’s real and sweet life.”

-Excerpt from a letter written to me by a good Chinese friend. She is a graduate student at Tsing Hua University, Beijing China.

By J. Tobin Rothlein

I am at the very southern-most tip of China. Vietnam lies off in the unseeable distance, behind the green carpet coned mountains and the South China Sea. Water buffalo pace the grassier parts of the beach. Palm trees, cacti, and other unrecognizable foliage paint a tranquil tropical backdrop. A group of Hui Zu girls exchange money and sell pearls here outside of Sanya, on the Dadong beach. They are young, healthy, and beautiful. "End-of-the-day-lipstick" lips stained clay red from chewing Betel nut. Earth eyes. Brown skin. They wear thin, flowing cotton outfits riddled with mismatched patterns. Their clothing dances in the erratic sea winds. They look like gypsy ghosts. Spirits counting pearls and playing in the sand. Their Putonghua (Mandarin) is easily comprehended. Skilled communicators, they are a joy to talk with. Words come close to a game. It is the ancient art of the barter. Their accent is inebriat-

(Naxi Zu girl eating on the riverbank, Yunnan Province, PRC.)
Bay in a small mountain village with no food except bananas, Xishuangbanna, PRC.

ing and playful. A long “aah” sound is applied to the end of most words. “Wo Gousou ni-aaaaah”, like children singing their words instead of speaking them. The words become fun, recreational.

It is tradition for the Hui women not to cut their hair. Consequently, age can be judged by hair length. Another Hui tradition is to keep the women’s heads covered. The women here use pastel colored towels bought in town. Yellow, pink or blue with a floral design. Girls wear them tied under the chin, and women wear them wrapped on the top of the head. The Hui are the only settlement of Moslems on all of Hainan Island. The sole occupation of girls up until the age of 20 is illegal money exchange and pearl selling. The girls like very much that I am interested in the Hui People and are happy to chat with me (after I buy some pearls). Due to our interest, they invite my friend and me to their village.

We arrive at the village, after a 50 minute blue cab journey. It is like entering another world. Thick groves of palms and tropical fruit trees fill the yards and line the dirt streets. Little beautiful beings are everywhere: children, chickens, baby fowl of all sorts. The word “fertile” comes instantly to mind. Life is everywhere. The entire village is vital and healthy. My friend and I are oddities—big awkward white beings with three dimensional noses. Little kids peer up at us with horror and amazement in their eyes. Some cry and run. The oldest girl tells me that for many of the young children it is the first time they have ever seen a Laowei, or “foreigner.” For a moment I feel like the most popular animal in the zoo.

Four generations live in this village. It seems as though everyone is related. We are taken to see a relative of some sort. A gracefully aged woman sits on a wooden chair in the front yard. She wears traditional Hui clothing. All black. Her face is comprised of an elaborate grainwork of wrinkles. I ask her permission for a photograph. A magical smile forms, pushing the wrinkles into new swirling patterns. She looks as though she could be in her eighties or nineties. A youthful, life-force energy swarms around her with the flies and the heat. It is beautiful. It is the energy of the village.

The girls pick armfuls of star fruit from one of the many trees in the yard, apologizing profusely that the mangoes are not yet in season. We start walking to the home of the two sisters in the group. One in the group disappears to visit her grandmother. She is soon replaced by every child in the village, forming a processional train of peering eyes behind us.

The men in the village stay out of the spotlight. They smile politely from doorways, or from beside their blue cabs. The men seem to be mainly employed in village labor and driving these cabs. That coupled with the money exchange/pearl selling trade of the young woman probably has quite a bit to do with the village’s relative prosperity.

We are taken to the house of the two sisters. It is spartan but surprisingly spacious. Over the front door is a decorated Moslem sign; there is a table to the right and a hard couch to the left. The one large room opens into a
kitchen which is open on one side, leading into the backyard, a palm forest. Their mother is beautiful and strong. She gives the impression of being the backbone of the family. Their father is quiet and hangs in the background. There is a water pump in the backyard where the girls begin washing the star fruit. I wonder how I will eat these star fruits, knowing that the water they are being washed in would make my stomach very uncomfortable. One of those awkward cultural quagmires: I do not want to insult them by not eating the fruits. I end up opting for the honest approach, explaining that if we were to eat the peel which is washed in the water we could get sick, because our stomachs are not used to the water here. Seems simple enough. "Don't eat the skin" they say. I try to eat a star fruit without getting any of the peel in my mouth. The fruit's very shape defies any simple approach. I am performing microscopic surgery with my teeth, fussing awkwardly with a small green fruit and dribbling all over myself. My friend is doing no better. We successfully amuse the family as well as the whole gallery of spectators: young girls, boys, women with babies, and chickens, that gather in the doorway.

"God sends us on journeys and seeks to reshape our lives through them."

-My Slovak roommate, Martin, told me this when I first arrived in Beijing. I cannot remember where he heard it, the Bible perhaps, or maybe it was his mother. I wrote it on the first page of my journal and I thought of it often.

We are village performers before a multi-leveled peering orb fest. Younger brother enters the house from the backyard with his pet rabbit dangling from a small clenched fist (a well needed distraction)! "My younger brother would peel us from the house interior, leading us off towards the community mosque. Swimming through a sea of brown eyes and runny noses, we arrive at the mosque as it is being decorated for an upcoming Moslem holiday. I try to imagine every woman and man in the village being married in this same place. Ribbons and flags are being wrapped around the poles of the mosque, which resembles a tent. All members of the society: men, women, and small children, work on the project. I see for the first time a previously missing element: The women in my own age group. They are shy and peer from around a corner. Hair to their bottoms, I am surprised to see that they are not wearing their traditional head coverings. When they discover that I have seen them, they retreat. Naked children play around the outside of the mosque waving small blue Moslem flags. Their older sisters chase after them, trying to throw clothes on them before we, the foreigners, see. The children think it is a game and so we are treated to an amusing "naked catch me if you can," weaving around jewelry-making booths,
and disrupting chickens who indignantly cluck and ruffle out of the way.

"We'll now take you to see our grandparents. They are the oldest in the village, both in their 90's." A small walk through the village. We are presented to a man smelling of old age and sitting in timeless tranquility. He looks as though he is held together by strings. He smiles at us curiously and unconditionally. I wonder if he ever thought he would see the day when his granddaughters would bring two Western men home from work. A rough, wooden, makeshift bed stands on the porch beside him, shrouded in cloth. The flies seem exceptionally heavy here. Their buzzing in my ear diminishes the sounds of the children and the chickens. Someone peels back the bed's dark fabric and I see a small framed sickly woman. A solemn thought comes into my head and will not leave. This is a death bed. Her body will never leave here. To witness life crossfading into death, slowly, evenly, and with all the perfection of nature, I would only need to remain here long enough. A woman's life slowly falls from her, surrounded by the ones who love her and whom she loves. Before me, a beautiful portrait of the human life-cycle. Children running and laughing, chickens clucking with their young, and a woman lying beside her husband, dying. Dying and living at the same time, right there on the front porch to the song of the flies. Grandmother lifts her head slightly, just enough to tilt her face towards me and smile. Delay. I smile back. Look down. Grandfather tells us of the time before cement and bricks, but it is difficult to comprehend his language. I feel I am missing out on much of the beauty behind his words, but how can I feel cheated? To receive a century old smile and all the wisdom it holds is a blessing enough, on any continent in the world.

As we are leaving we see a young girl with her arms draped around a bottomless baby boy. Another younger "sister" stands naked beside her. She peers at me with an innocent curiosity from the safety of big sister's shadow. As I take a picture, the older girl smiles. It is the smile of a mother with her children. Pride, responsibility, and love. It is a haunting and memorable image. One of our Hui friends tells us that everyone is very busy in the village and that children learn to take care of children. I see that there are bonds of trust and love in this community stretching out beyond the nuclear family. I can see it in every direction. I could feel it in the warmth and security that the village emits. Beside the flies and the dirt, I cannot help but feel clean, and comfortable.

My friend and I are soon in a little blue cab again, heading back to our room on the beach and saying thankful good-byes to our friends. I am leaving tomorrow for Yunnan province, a two day journey even with a plane flight (Canton to Kunming) in the itinerary. I have the uncomfortable sadness mixed with excitement that comes whenever one leaves one place for another. I watch as the gypsy ghost girls gather their sisters on the beach. It is time for all of them to return to the village for dinner. They are happy and free. Smiling. Shouting. Laughing.

I feel a sentimentality, a human longing, for a language where all friends are "brothers" and "sisters". Where everyone is home for dinner. Where love extends beyond the confines of the nuclear family and pumps through the streets of the village. The village is a living entity. Thriving with the energy force of the old and the young, of life and death. A perfect and beautiful cycle. A song.

J. Tobin Rothlein, K '93, spent his six month F.S. in Beijing, China. He is to return to China for his SIP. Tobin is majoring in Theatre and Communications.
Bedraggled, dirty, cold, and exhausted, I sat in the Moscow train station waiting for my friend Walt to return with train tickets. Like many European train stations, the one in Moscow is basically a huge open space with no seats and only a few poles to lean on. I was sitting on my backpack nervously eyeing a few Kazakhstani men who were looking at me the way one looks at a particularly delectable piece of meat. In frustration, I thought of a few nasty things to say to them. After all, I had just spent three days in Odessa and a week in Kiev. I couldn’t find tickets home (to St. Petersburg) because it was October Revolution Weekend and everyone was travelling. As it was, Walt and I had to buy our tickets to Moscow from a black marketeer at an outrageous price—120 rubles for the two tickets, or approximately $1.20. Luckily, before the scary men decided to ask me my price, Walt returned. There were no tickets available on any of the ten trains going to St. Petersburg that day. So, we picked up our backpacks, wished a joyful farewell to the Kazakhstani men and trudged wearily to the train tracks in search of a blackmail victim.

After eyeing several of the conductors, Walt wandered up to a young, happy-go-lucky Russian, pulled out his pack of Marlboro cigarettes—quite a commodity there—and started smoking. He then pulled out our used tickets, slipped 75 rubles underneath them and said, “We have tickets on this train, right?” The conductor took the tickets, the money disappeared, and said, “Of course!” Walt gave him a cigarette, and we gratefully got on the train.

Knowing that we could get caught and thrown off the train, Walt and I worked our way back to the last compartment. Of course, there were no seats available so we thought we would have to stand in the aisle for the entire trip; it would take ten hours because the stupid train stopped in every village between Moscow and St. Petersburg. Feeling very uncomfortable and more than a little nervous, Walt and I watched the people go by and tried to stay out of the way. We were standing near a grandfather and his granddaughter, two Russian men, and two Kazakhstani men. Everyone was sitting on the two bottom beds. (Third class compartments were open to the aisle, having two bunkbeds facing each other, another set across the aisle, and overhead luggage racks). All of the people were eyeing us strangely and making comments to each other that we did not understand.

Finally, the train began moving. As we breathed a sigh of relief, we heard the grandfather tell his granddaughter that all the tickets were sold, so we must have bribed our way on the train. He then told her to climb into the higher bunk, told us to store our luggage in his space, and asked us to sit down. We gratefully accepted his offer and I immediately fell asleep. When I awoke, Walt was gone. I looked around nervously and one of the Kazakhstani men told me that Walt had stepped out and asked me if I was tired. Upon hearing my answer he asked where I was from because he did not recognize my accent. After making him guess for a while (he thought I was either Latvian or Polish), I finally told him I was American. He was stunned and began asking several

*“Bokzal is the Russian word for train station.”*
In the footsteps of
The Wife of Bath

By Rebecca Hobson

After more than two hours on a train, we reached Canterbury from Cambridge, only to find the cathedral was closing in 25 minutes. (I didn’t know cathedrals closed!) Nevertheless, the city of Canterbury was exceptionally beautiful and exciting, and it was wonderful to visit “the land of Chaucer” as well as make a meaningful pilgrimage to the site of the martyrdom of St. Thomas à Becket.

A Theatre/Communications major, Rebecca studied in Cambridge for six months and “definitely” wants to return to England.

Laura Miller, K ‘93, completed her F.S. in St. Petersburg, Russia. She is an English major with a strong background in Russian language and literature.
Let's Make A Deal!

By Robin Kendall Willard

The ART of vending became interesting to me when I went to Oaxaca, Mexico for three months this past Spring. There, the rules of the game were not only fascinating, but incredibly sociologically intriguing.

In terms of marketing, with the exception of store items, to purchase anything, it is necessary to know how to bargain. Most vendors operate by first naming the most outrageously expensive price they can think of, anticipating that the customer will challenge it. These challenges result in the yelling out of prices, as well as a naming of all the fine qualities the products have or reasons why a customer is not willing to pay more.

My first experience as a customer in Latin America began my first weekend in Oaxaca, when I went to the largest Indian market in Mexico. On Saturday, the main market day, Indians come down from the mountains and from pueblos in the outskirts of the town to sell their goods. These goods include livestock, pottery, fruit, crop, clothing, rugs, jewelry, and leather items.

The Oaxacan market is very well structured. Bargaining rules are highly organized and supportive, as well as protective of the Indians. Every Saturday, before coming to town, different vendors, generally from the Zapotec tribe, decide on the lowest price they will settle on for every item. Ultimately, every group then enters the market having a different set price for the same item.

My first time at the market, I ended up buying a pair of sandals at the beginning price. Much to my embarrassment, I found that the vendors were not only shocked by my lame acceptance of their originally set price, but also disappointed. I had not bargained with them.

I left the market that day feeling somewhat guilty for not being able to fit into this cultural aspect of Mexico. Consequently, I took it upon myself to learn more about the vending and culture in Mexico. With time I learned more about market-vendors, investigated street-vendors, and discovered criminal-vendors.

Street vendors can be found on practically every block in Mexico. Several come from tribes during the week to earn extra money, selling fresh fruit, crops and bread, in addition to other products they were, in most cases, not able to sell the previous weekend.

Street vendors are a lot more aggressive than those found in markets. Those that carry what they sell can constantly approach potential customers, whether or not they are sitting in a park reading, dining in an outdoor restaurant, or jogging. At the beach, while lying out with my sister, I was approached by over 10 clothing and jewelry vendors within 45 minutes. One knew just enough English to come up with these winning lines: “Two for the price of one! K-Mart prices...Let’s make a deal!”

Nothing exposed me more to the vending aspects of Mexican culture than my visit to a jail. In Mexico, most jails permit the selling of baskets, jewelry and pottery either from inside cells or in a large room outside of their cells. Some jails permit
criminals to make pottery in the actual jail house, while others are forced to rely on their families to make and bring products to sell. The advantage of this open-to-public jail market is that the products are not only incredibly inexpensive, but also that the earning for each sale helps the criminal's family survive and eventually pays off the fine, resulting in the criminal's release (which, after hearing about a "criminal" who had been in jail for over two years without ever having been proven guilty, I find a crucial necessity).

Overall, before going to Mexico, I had never realized how much vendors' lives depend on the sales they make. I had also never noticed how many different interesting backgrounds each type of vender has—their different reasons for selling, where their earnings are going, or how they are being spent.

Now, when I look up at that sales woman walking towards me carrying a handful of shoe boxes, wearing a big grin on her face, I can only smile back. I have come to the realization that although she appears somewhat obnoxious, she is just trying to make a living—for whatever causes or reasons. Furthermore, she is being just as aggressive as Mexican street vendors, only her approach is more tactful. Amongst such a competitive marketing world, how and when you approach a potential customer becomes a matter of survival.

La Dueña de mi destino

By Jessica Parker

Just recently, I returned from doing my Career Development in Madrid writing a small travel guide for the Organization of American Programs in Spain. This project was made possible by the generosity of the family that first hosted my home-stay in the summer of 1989, as they invited me to stay in their home once again. They have continually opened their homes and their lives to me, not only accepting me into their lives as an American student, but also as a member of their family.

La familia Pérez-Martín have invited me back a total of four times since my first stay, and thanks to this unending generosity I've been able to master the language, meet new people, watch the boys grow up, and María José has become the sister I never had. Also, while on my CD I was able to share in the excitement of the family's newest addition: baby Elena.

The following story was written in the fall after that first foreign-stay experience which has changed my life forever, and made me into the Spanish Major/Spanish Addict that I am today.

Truthfully, I had my doubts. It wasn't an everyday occurrence for me to embark on a month-long stay with a family in Spain, especially a family I had never met! Nevertheless, I swallowed my fears, realizing that the opportunity to experience another culture, a whole other way of life, was all the incentive I needed.

My Spanish dictionary and my self-confidence as my only travel companions, I boarded that plane on July 3, 1989, assuring my parents (and myself) that all would be well.

When the plane touched down in Madrid, my heart was pounding loudly in my ears. Could I do it? Could I speak the language well enough to be understood? Worse yet, could I understand the people?

After our group cleared customs, I felt a little better, but just where was my suitcase? After forty-five minutes of pure fear, my suitcase appeared—intact—and now I was headed towards la salida. We all knew what was behind those doors—dozens of anxious Spanish eyes searching for their student.

I slowly pulled my overpacked suitcase into the bustling crowd. I walked carefully, knowing that someone in that crowd was waiting for me. Suddenly, I heard someone call my name, “Jessica? Jessica?” (pronounced something like “Yéseeca? Yéseca?”). It must be María José, I thought, and I was claimed at last!

As she rapidly asked me questions in Spanish, I silently cursed my Spanish teacher. How could she do this to me? She told me that I would be wonderful at speaking the language. Was she wrong! Not understanding half of the...
b) stay calm and be strong, or
c) say that I was tired and then
dash into my room. Choosing
the cowardly route, I naturally
chose the latter.

Once safely in my room, I
threw myself down on the bed
and cried. Outside I could
hear Spanish whispers. I had
failed, they hated me. I knew
little of their language and I
wanted to go home. All of
these thoughts rushed
through my head until I slowly
cried myself to sleep.

A few hours later, I awoke
and could hear low voices at­
tempting not to disturb my
sleep. I stood up and walked
towards the door. My hand
touched the door knob, but
froze. I stood there for what
seemed like an hour. My pes­
simism telling me to stay hid­
den inside, but something
depth inside myself told me
that it was up to me. That
month was going to be what­
conversely.

I wonder if I fooled
them?

As we pulled into the
driveway of their summer cot­
tage, I heard myself gulp.
Outside the gate sat two smil­
ing friends eagerly waiting to
meet la americana. I felt perspi­
ration forming. Not only were
there two brothers, uncles, and
aunts to meet, but friends too?
So many people to converse
with! Stay calm, I assured
myself.

No sooner had I put my
suitcase down on the bed than
I was escorted to the dinner
table to enjoy a mountainous
plate of paella. Now anyone
who knows me knows that I
don’t like fish. Okay, I asked
myself, how would a mature
person handle this situation?

Too soon to be comfortable with
expressing my likes and dislikes, I
silently shoveled rice and vege­
tables into my mouth, carefully
avoiding the shellfish. But, they
noticed, I had not fooled them:
"Why don't you eat?" they asked.
My head throbbed, I knew I had to
answer them, and in Spanish no
less! I tried to explain, forcing a
smile on my face. Luis, my four­
teen-year-old Spanish brother
stared at me, causing my already
jumbled Spanish to become even
worse!

Suddenly, I felt like I couldn’t
handle it all. I had made a mis­
take, are there any flights leaving
tonight? I wondered. Feeling the
warning signs of a serious crying
spell coming on, I weighed my
options. I could either: a) run into
the bathroom, cry, and hope that
when I returned to the table they
would not notice my swollen eyes,
"Expect the Unexpected"

By Christopher Knorr

"Isabelle est morte." Although many of my foreign study memories have begun to fade at the edges, that day, those words have burned themselves into permanence. "Isabelle est morte."

"Expect the unexpected," Dr. Fugate had stated over and over again. But there are barriers, certain occasions for which no one can prepare. Who could have expected that a nineteen-year-old and three of her friends would drive into the rainy night and never return, forever lost to "that good night."

What do you say to a father who has lost his child? What do you say in English, let alone in French? My stunned mind searched for some magic terminologies, words that would cure the grief and somehow resurrect the dead. It didn't work; all I could say was a very strained "Mon Dieu."

The next day I moved in with another family where I spent two weeks while the G— mourned. Just before I left I witnessed the amazing strength of the French family as relatives poured in from all over France. For my part I did not attend the funeral—I hadn't known my host-sister that well—but sent a note enclosed in a condolence card. The note used a very rigid style—taught to me by my new host mother—mirroring that prescribed by American societal etiquette some sixty years ago and reflecting the tenacity of the older ways in France. Nevertheless, it conveyed the extent to which my heart went out to them and my fervent hope that both God and time would quickly bring them peace. I still pray for them.

What have we learned, Charlie Brown? I do not know. Perhaps that certain absolutes exist within the human experience, certain universalities that apply across the board. All human beings are born, live and die—experiences that transcend language, culture and nation. Only the rituals change.

Christopher Knorr, K '93 is a Political Science and International Area Studies (Western Europe) double major. Currently, he is thinking about a career as a political analyst. He spent his Foreign Study in Caen, France.

Chris' host sister, Isabelle, died in a car accident in November 1991. She was 19 years old.
El Merengue

By Heidi Early

It's raining
that cool, soft rain
that suppresses the dust for awhile.
Dust prevails.

Somehow...
I've managed to escape the *merengue* tonight
In this *café*...
In this country...
In my head...
the rhythmic pounding ceases
as I drink
too
sweet
coffee
and try to imagine
a home
I can't quite pinpoint.

I feel woman tonight
here,
where I fight
everyday
to be me...
to be a person...
to be something
besides a f—.

Some tranquility engulfs me.
Maybe I protect myself.
Maybe I really feel it
in this mess
of
disorganized corruption,
backward thought.
It doesn't matter
as long as I feel—something.

It's easy to turn off
the din
of Spanish
flying around me
It bounces off my shell.
I pull in like a turtle.
Tomorrow—
again—
I will stick out my head
to the sun
and sweat
as I fight the heat
weighing me down
and maybe...
I will dance the *merengue*.

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Dominican Republic: At eleven, Teté was a poor girl from the countryside who moved to Santiago to be a maid. She is small for her age, but she has a spark of fire in her personality that makes her unforgettable.
Escape to Cuba

By Heidi Early

When I went to Cuba, I didn’t know what to expect. All I knew was that in Cuba people spoke Spanish and that Fidel Castro had implemented Socialism there. The relationship between the United States and Cuba has been extremely tense and restricted. We, as average Americans, know very little about Cuba, and the images the name calls up are not friendly ones. These two photos illustrate part of what I saw. Empty streets. The occasional car is a pre-blockade American make, or a boxy Russian Lada. Cubans walk or bike or pile on to huge belching buses. The people on the streets are healthy. I saw no beggars, no sick or starving. The children, though rigidly uniformed and “socialized,” appeared happy and lively. That youthful spirit seems to flourish in a land of education until they begin to realize the depth to which their confinement to one small, isolated, ostracized island runs. It is then that their spirits are broken.
Arriving in a new country is scary. Even things like the blurring of the T.V. are unfamiliar, the sounds you were used to are replaced by something different. The whole environment has another melody, the sounds that people make while talking are unfamiliar. You are almost glad to recognize a product, though you thought the endless familiar melodies accompanying four good reasons to buy a Volkswagen are a serious threat to the person you were before you came here. Nobody knows the you you were back home. (If you're into this cheesy kind of expression, I don't feel like looking for another word right now. This is one of the advantages you have as a writer: you never have to deal with the complaints of the reader, unlike face to face situations where someone might actually tell you "Hey, this is stupid." This is one of the reasons why writing is so much fun, you should try it once in awhile.) No-body knows what you did and what you didn't do. Nobody knows how you looked, behaved, your weak spots and your strong-holds. What a chance to be someone else. Get a new haircut. Play cool guy for a while. Play red-neck, play human rights activist. No one has an image of you, you don't have to deal with all the stereotypes people in Germany have of you. A person here doesn't know you, there is a lot of black space to be filled by what you tell. Okay, there is always the danger that nobody cares what you say anyway, but provided the option to have an audience, you can be anyone you ever wanted to be. Get all the girls you didn't get. Try all the cheap tricks you and everybody else knows where you're from. They might work.

Tempting, as I said. Still, the danger of getting lost in the new role exists. Maybe this is why travelling abroad is so scary once in a while. You find out that a lot of the things that make up your identity are outside of you. You are determined by surroundings, not only your own will, beliefs, ideals and weaknesses. You are the place where you live, the people you hang out with. Friends, clubs, discos, school form your beliefs, and the papers you read (if you do, if not: start today).

These are vital parts of the construct you consider yourself. To realize that the actual self is such a small thing is an experience. It makes you alert and it makes you understand (at least a little, of course not completely) how it feels for a migrant worker. To be lost somewhere. And why it is so easy to break people, to change people, to manipulate people. And it makes you proud when you realize afterwards that you made it, you stayed yourself. After having a good time and still not playing along or wearing a mask, pretending to be something you are not. After time abroad people come back and it is scary how they changed, even if it was for the better. It makes you think about what it was that actually took off for another country.

The arrival somewhere else is most obnoxious things in the world. You hum the tune, then end abruptly, scared about yourself, scared about how familiar these consuming mechanisms are. After all, the two countries are not all that different. Everywhere the same movies, music, and images of how a real man is supposed to be, the image of how a beautiful woman is supposed to look. Shades are cool everywhere, no matter if a country's weather does not provide a need for them. Open red sports cars are cool, being poor, fat or disabled is unccool everywhere. Western societies share a similarity in their beliefs, no matter how stupid they are. Maybe this is the reason why it is so easy to have fun here. Close your eyes, forget, play along. It is fun, and it is tempting.

The arrival somewhere else is

Lars Reppesgaard, currently in the midst of his three month F.S. in Kalamazoo, is an International Student from Bremen, Germany. He is a student in Hannover where he majors in History and English Literature. Lars plans to go into journalism or teaching after finishing his degree.
"An Experience Not Soon Forgotten"

By Ron Whitney

"Brindisi, Italy has to be one of the most unpleasant cities in the world," we thought, "since every sign here points the way out of it." The inhabitants must have terrible self-esteem problems. Indeed, we had seen more agreeable places, but it was the gate to Greece.

The boat was not to arrive until evening, and so we desperately looked for ways to entertain ourselves. After all, Sophie, Sylvie, Angela, Chris and I, along with a few Asian tourists, were the only tourists in the city. We went to a great open market for supplies, and after several hours in the cold, we managed to find shelter in the abandoned ferry port. Here we revered the Canadian national pastime: playing foot hockey with stale hunks of Italian bread to keep from freezing.

When the boat finally arrived, there was a swarm of Maple Leaf-porting Canadians the likes of which I had never seen. Sophie, Sylvie, and Angela felt as if they were back in Alberta. Chris and I also donned Canadian flags, for our friends feared what would happen if the Italians took us for typical, obnoxious American tourists. We finally pulled out into the Adriatic, and the lights of the city gave way to the

light of the stars.

Since our Eurail passes only provided us with deck passage, we froze our butts off. But, after an hour or so, we and the other backpacking foreigners were let into the bar to keep warm. We were filthy from travelling, so we sneaked into the paying passengers' showers, and then conked out on the floor of the snack bar with about twenty other people.

The next morning, we entered Greece under the sunrise. We revelled in the sun and the water. The islands we passed seemed just a bit too perfect, and the water was so blue it seemed as if light were emanating from it. It was a magnificent day, but for Chris, the passage could have been easier. "Seasickness," he said, "is an experience not soon forgotten."

Ron Whitney, K '93, is a French major who spent his F.S. in Caen, France. He plans to be a French professor.
"Far off the European path"

...in Turkey

By Jason Bull and Jan Williams

Probably the coolest thing we saw while traveling was a camel-wrestling festival in Turkey. The sights, the sounds, the smells, the people and the atmosphere were all so distinctly foreign that the experience is hard to capture in words, but we have to try. At this unbelievable event, far off the tourist path, we felt more immersed in a different culture than anywhere else. This made the event unforgettable.

After two hours on a fine Turkish train (to go all of 50 miles), we arrived in Kuyadesi, east of Selçuk. We were surprised to find over 5,000 people gathered for the event, in a town about the size of "K"'s campus. The camels wrestle in the center of a large circular arena with a 150 foot diameter. Two circles of bodies compose this arena—an inner circle of mostly men, and an outer circle of women and children watching from atop parked tractors or old buses.

We weren't there for more than five minutes, when we saw how temporary this inner boundary was. While wrestling, two camels bolted toward the human perimeter; the spectators immediately turned and ran in all directions to avoid the stampede. As soon as the camels were restrained, though, the crowd quickly returned to form its tight circle around the action. Wild.
The whole spectacle was amazing. As each family prepares its camel to wrestle, they dance around him banging drums, chanting and playing pipe-flutes. A female camel is also paraded nearby to add to the hypnotic excitation. You know the camel's getting pumped because he starts foaming like a draft beer. When the camel's face is covered, he shakes his head in large circles, flinging the stuff ten feet.

When they're "ready" each team runs its wrestler from opposite ends of the ring to meet in the middle. To see these enormous beasts running at one another groaning and throwing saliva everywhere was stupefying.

The sport is not violent or cruel at all—camels are expensive commodities in Turkey. The wrestling is regulated by two teams, who rope the camels and pull them apart if they bite or kick. The winner is the camel who pushes his opponent to its knees; his prize is an ornate, hand-made Turkish rug.

Maybe the best way to describe it all, though, is with a Turkish phrase we learned, "chok gazele," or "very good."

At left: Located in the Cappadocia region, the valley of Göreme still boasts many habitations of its former religious community. Carved out of the cliffs, the churches and complexes were built around 850 B.C.

Below: One of the most dramatic images in Istanbul's famous skyline is the Sultanhamet, or Blue Mosque.
At right: The elaborate interior and vast scale of the Blue Mosque stress the importance of religion in the Turkish culture. Below: Derinkuyu, one of Turkey's two underground cities built in the fifth century B.C., descends seven stories and was capable of accommodating 20,000 inhabitants.
Above: Temple of Hatshepsut, Luxor, Egypt. This funerary temple was built into the cliff for Queen Hatshepsut during her reign over Egypt. At left: The Temple of Karnak’s 125 ft. tall columns originally supported a stone roof and still show the Egyptian art that decorated them.

Jason Bull, K '93, is an Economics major. Currently, Jason is thinking about a career in health care administration. He spent six months in Caen, France. Jason took many of the photographs accompanying this story.

Jan Williams, K '93, is an Economics major. He spent his Foreign Study in Florence, Italy.
Getting to London

By John Purrenhage

The day had come for me to meet Brad Daleiden in the port town of Calais to travel to England together. I arrived at Calais-Ville station and found Brad. We rushed back to the train platform and caught the train to Calais-Maritime, where the ferries were located. We bought our tickets and waited; it was about 5:00 p.m. The trip across the English Channel took about an hour and a half, during which it started to rain. We arrived at Dover and started towards customs. I filled out my landing card and made my way through the cordons to the border guard's desk, where I was subjected to a number of questions. The third question was, "Are you travelling with anyone?" I replied that I was and indicated Brad, who was still standing 50 yards behind me, filling out his landing card. I guess the English just don’t like bearded Americans who've been studying in France, because he continued to question me on why I had been in France, if I had a plane ticket out of France, if I was returning to the U.S. soon, why I had been in Dover a week earlier. I looked up in the middle of my questioning and noticed Brad on the other side of customs, waiting for me!

Finally, I was let through and we went outside, joking about the fact that we were going to hitch-hike the 70 miles to London. See, we had it on good authority, namely Anton, a former "K" international student from Manchester, that thumbing was easy in England, so we were planning on hitching all over. Well, it was dark and rainy when we hit the side of the freeway going to “London.” We knew we couldn’t hitch on the side of the road, but we didn’t want to just stand by the ferry station trying to get a ride, so we walked towards a service station. We approached a burly young man filling his tank. He agreed to take us as far as Canterbury. We small talked in his car for the next twenty minutes about England and our studies. Brad asked him what his profession was; he calmly replied, "I'm a butcher."

We got to Canterbury alive. The butcher was on his way to his girlfriend’s, as it was Valentine's day, which reminded me that I had some Valentine's candy in my
backpack. I took out the little white bag containing the red, cinnamon hearts and other red, jellied candies. We resumed hitching in the rain, eating the candy which was our only food. We came upon a traffic jam and went from car to car seeking a new ride, which Brad found. I jogged across the two lanes of stalled freeway traffic to the gentleman’s new, grey Renault, opened the door, threw in my bag of candy, then my small pack, then my large backpack. We sighed in relief to be out of the rain and chatted with the man who’d picked us up. Eventually, I realized that I’d thrown my candy onto his seat, so I reached under my other bags and retrieved the little white sack, which was by now completely soaked with rain and dripping with red food coloring. I said nothing, but put them away in my backpack.

An hour later, we arrived at a metro station in London. Brad got out one side of the car, I the other. While pulling my bags carelessly onto the sidewalk, I noticed that some of my candies were still on the back seat. I leaned into the car again and tried to brush them into the street, but there were too many. Because I didn’t want the driver to see me doing this, I turned to Brad and said, “Let’s go.” But Brad thought he saw something on the seat, so he leaned into the car and started picking up the candy. The man turned around and asked what he was doing. Brad looked down at his hand, covered in sticky red hearts, then up at the man and said, “My friend left some candies in your car.” As he pulled his head out of the car I could see a deep magenta stain on the grey upholstery. We walked away hastily, embarrassed that I had, indeed, left some candies in his car—plastered all over the back seat.
Ten days prior to Ash Wednesday, the Venetians celebrate Carnival. Tourists flock from all over the world to witness the atmosphere of Venice and this intriguing celebration. The center of action is Piazza San Marco, the main square in Venice. Here, you can watch theatrical and acrobatic groups performing and dancing in the streets. The costumes were the most fantastic element of the celebration.
Jennie Laird makes a new friend in Budapest.

Photo Credits

Julie Delamarter recently returned from her Foreign Study in Quito, Ecuador. She studies Math and Computer Science at K and plans to teach those subjects at the high school level. Julie is very involved with K's campus community, taking part in InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, CORD, and the swimming and diving team.

Wende Esrael, K '93, is a Music major. She studied in Florence, Italy. After graduation she plans to go on to graduate school to study musicology.

Amaar Malik, K '94 was a member of the first K group to go to Oaxaca. He is a Health Science/Psychology double major.

Kate McGrath, K '93, studied in Clermont-Ferrand, France for F.S.

Andrea Miller, K '93, is a Psychology major. She studied for six months in Caen, France.

Christine Olah, K '93, is an English major. She studied for nine months in Aberdeen, Scotland. Christine would like to go back to Scotland after graduation.

Susan Ringler, K '93, is a Spanish/English double major. She spent six months in Quito, Ecuador for her Foreign Study.

Fumiko Yarita, K '93, is a Psychology major. She plans to do her SIP in photography this fall. After graduation, Fumiko will be going to Italy for three months, where she hopes to take lots of photos and escape from reality before starting her new career.

Front cover: Scene from a bullfight in Cáceres, Spain. Photo by Fumiko Yarita.

Inside front cover: Bai Zu man and child, Yunnan Province, PRC. Photo by J. Tobin Rothlein.

Back cover: Scene from San Marco Plaza, Venice, Italy. Photo by Jill Thompson.

Inside back cover: Inside of St. Peter’s Cathedral, Rome, Italy. Photo by Jason Bull.