The Atlas
Spring & Summer 1993
The Atlas is a publication of Kalamazoo College that features student writing, artwork, and photography drawn from their study abroad experiences. The magazine reaches students and their parents as well as alumni, friends of the College, prospective students, and current members of the College community. Students are invited to submit original prose and poetry, photography, and drawings for consideration. Faculty members from the English Department and the Office of Foreign Study supervise its production. Funding for The Atlas comes from administrative offices, alumni, and friends of Kalamazoo College.

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Carnival
Photograph by Heather Carstens
A Venetian masquerader strolls and poses before the Canale di San Marco during Carnival in Venice. Heather Carstens '94 is majoring in biology and participated in the six-month program in Bonn, Germany.

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The 1993 Spring & Summer Atlas

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September

“And this is your little sister, Nina. She’s four years old.”

I felt anxious, having never had a little sister before, much less one who speaks solely in German. I said “hallo” to the brown-haired little girl as she clenched her arms firmly around her mother’s leg, peering up at me. The rain seemed to be waiting to pick up again, and the chilly gusts that whistled through Bonn’s train station penetrated our jackets and sweatshirts as we “K” students got acquainted with the families with whom we’d be living for the next five or six months. I was the first to go, and I nervously said good-bye to my exhausted friends before going with Nina and her mother, Ina. The drive to my home in Ückesdorf took me through a hilly, tree-dotted landscape once we were out of the city. We pulled into the driveway of a white, artificial-looking duplex that was in no way flattered by the smudgy gray cloud cover. After I was led to my room, I flopped into bed for the longest nap of my life.

December

I cleared the dishes after dinner, as usual, and stowed them in the dishwasher. The half-frozen drops of water that dove lazily off the edge of the house’s shutters and trim splattered and smacked on the cement patio outside, clearly audible despite the double-paned storm windows. I scuffed into the bathroom and dabbed my nose with tissue, then made my way up the spiraling staircase to my room. What a way to spend a Friday night, I thought. After fighting off every ailment that two little kids could bring home to their American host brother, they finally got me. I noticed a light on in the master bedroom and saw that Nina was about to go to sleep. When she saw me, I sat at the edge of her bed and she proudly announced that she was sick again. “I know. Now you and Olly have me sneezing and coughing too.” Nina reached over and grabbed a hardcover book from her night stand. “Do you want to play Where’s Waldo?” (She pronounced it “Vair’s Valdo.”) “Sure.” We began searching for Waldo, and as we went on the third or fourth page, I sneezed violently. “I’m sick, Nina.” “Me too!” “You want to be sick together?” “Ja!” “Okay.” We continued searching for Waldo.

February I

I bounded inside, dropped my bags on the white tile floor, and threw open the tinted glass door. Nina sat on the floor, drawing pictures with a set of colored markers. “Nina!” I hefted her up and squeezed her in an enormous bear hug. “Kev-in!” she said tersely, but her little arms snaked around my neck and she hugged me back. Ina walked by us, laughing. “Mommy, I think Kevin loves me!” “Yes, Nina, I think you’re right.”

February II

They were gone. We had given each other our final hugs, and they had gone to school and work as I waited for my 10:22 bus to come. I had placed their gifts on the table, and in the paws of the stuffed golden retriever, I set the card to all of them:

Oliver, the fossil stone is for you. Take care of it and be good for your mom. Stay brilliant.

Ina, the soap and bath oil is for you, in case you ever find the time to relax and enjoy it. Thank you for being a wonderful host mom.

And to Nina, I leave “Atlas,” my dog. (It’s not a bear, Nina!) Take care of him and bring him when you come and visit. I miss you already.

—Kevin

A Lonely Walk
Photograph by Kevin D. Houldsworth
A man strolls down a sidestreet in the Schnoor District in the town of Bremen, located on Germany’s northern coast. Built in the 1600s, the Schnoor District is now the home of many artists and craftworkers.

English major Kevin Houldsworth ’94 studied in Bonn, Germany for six months last fall and winter.
Street Encounters

Making the decision to take the walk is the hardest part. But I don’t suppose you could really call it a walk. You’d be in motion, as is the case in walking, but there are few other similarities with the leisurely meandering that my mind knows as the definition of a walk. This walk always has to have a purpose, a final destination. For a destination is your saving grace—the divine Escape from all that haunts you on your path.

Once the decision is made to brave the outside world, I slide open the big wood door, walk down the steps, greet the guard, and unlock the gate. I’m out, but still in “safe” territory. For this brief moment on this nameless street in front of my numberless house, I can be enchanted by the purple and pink bougainvillea climbing over the walls that surround everybody else’s numberless houses, and the strikingly beautiful women in their boubous. Of all that gives color to this society, the boubou does so most literally. Either rich damask cloth tie-dyed with handsome design or the bright cotton named lagos with so many patterns that you rarely see two alike, they are both often adorned with an exquisite embroidery around the neck. A beautiful creation born of patience and cheap manual labor.

But by now I’m at the end of my little street and must venture onto the main thoroughfare—one of the few with a name. I must choose my mode of transportation, for this journey is too long to be made by foot. I ask myself what is worse, getting into a bus that will not only be past maximum capacity, but at each following stop will somehow manage to cram in five to ten more passengers, or risk death or serious bodily injury in a car rapide whose drivers are undoubtedly the most reckless in the world? Most days, like today, the bus wins out, but thinking back to turns where even hanging on with both hands wouldn’t keep my feet on the ground, I realize that bus drivers are more than likely former car rapide drivers.

I descend. My first encounter will most likely be with a strolling pants vendor. Somehow I must find a way to convince him that no matter how much he reduces his price and regardless of the number of blocks he follows me, I won’t buy his pants. I try saying, “Thank you but I already have some.” If that doesn’t work, bluntly stating that they’re ugly usually keeps him in shock just long enough to make an escape.

As I enter the market, the flies and the smell of the soon-to-be-rotting meat are the first details to invade my senses. I concentrate on avoiding a meeting between my eyes and those of a very large and barely dead fish. I’m almost immediately surrounded by small boys wanting to sell me plastic bags or be my porter. Even though I’d like to help them out, my moral conscience will not allow me to assume the rich, white elitist role that inevitably goes along with letting this little kid carry my groceries.

Braving the stares and sideways glances and hoping that my very minimal knowledge of their language will somehow bridge the enormous gap that lies between us to destroy any potential hostility, I approach the ladies who are selling vegetables. I’m hoping for some sign of recognition or acceptance when they see that I’m purchasing the ingredients to prepare their national dish. It’s my feeble effort to be like them, to show my attempt at learning their ways and equally showing my respect for them. Furthermore, I am doing my small and perhaps futile part in trying to prove that not all the Americans here shuttle themselves between the International School to pick up their sheltered kids and the American Club to partake in American food, sports, movies, and other leisure activities or hide themselves in their enormous houses, with their imported butter. (I could maybe understand brownie mix or Hershey’s syrup, but butter? It’s always good to see proof of our tax dollars at work.) I guess I’m trying to repair some of the damage, but stereotypes are hard to dispel, especially when they prove so often to be true.

As I leave the market, I pass a peanut lady. All day she sits on her little spot in the sand or perhaps on the sidewalk in town preparing her packs of peanuts—cooked, raw, or sugared—all carefully arranged on her table made of wooden slats. What does she think about all day, I wonder. How can they stand the monotony? When do they see their children? At least their “counterparts”—the little old men who (on a blanket rather than at a table) sell the Coran and prayer beads—can help the hours pass with scheduled prayer and reading from the Coran. But wait. What about the shopkeepers, the women who stay at home to cook and clean all day, the breadmen who spend all day everyday in their bread stand boxes, which measure approximately three feet by four feet? How do they remain sane when they know that, barring some miracle, this is what they’ll be doing every day until the end of their days? Is this reason for depression on their behalf, or do they know something I don’t? I am convinced that a spirituality outside the realm of anything we know in our society plays a role in this.

But this train of thought is interrupted. “Hi, what’s up?” the boy who has strolled up alongside me says. Oh no, I say internally. “What are you doing? Do you mind if I walk with you?” Fearing impoliteness and cultural insensitivity I agree, miserably conscious of the mess I’m about to get myself in. “So, what are you doing here? Oh, you’re American (glimmer in the eye). I’d really love to go to America. You know, I don’t say this very often, but I really like you. Are you married? Do you have a boyfriend? That’s no problem, he’s in America; you need one here too. Where do you live? Can I call you?”
I somehow get away, my conscience weighted by the knowledge that in my rudeness I’ve contributed to a further decline of the American reputation. Soon after I am lured into a small shop. “Hello, my child. How are you? It’s been so long. What are you looking for? Since you are my child and my first customer of the day (it’s three in the afternoon), I’ll give you a good price.” The good price is two or three times what I should pay, but since I’m her “child” she will lower it for me. I leave with my purchase in the midst of her complaints. How will she feed her children? Giving in to her “child” she’s made no profit at all. But I know she’ll soon be engrossed with her next “child” and all thoughts of me will disappear.

For the journey home I have decided to put my fate in the hands of the *car rapide* driver. As the area I’m occupying on the bench is roughly three inches wide due to the rather large lady beside me who is taking up her space plus three quarters of mine, I’m more than secure, and my risk of flying out the opposite window is greatly diminished; I can safely suppress my urge to grab onto the nearest seatback. Still I must be on the lookout for through-the-window thieves and on my feet to deal with the verbal jeers of the men and the stares of the women. With the sounds of Phil Collins or Coranic verse coming from the speakers fashioned from empty plastic gasoline containers, I look out the windowless window and take in the beauty of this place. It is alive! So full of life that it is bubbling over at the sides. Dakar whizzes by, taking my breath away with its vitality.

*After the Wedding*
Photograph by Sarah Fairbrother
Five women pose in a wedding reception in Dakar, Senegal wearing colorful boubous, a garment consisting of a sarong skirt and long top with a whole cut out for the neck.

Sarah Fairbrother ’94, an international area studies major with a concentration in African studies, participated in the Senegal program for nine months. In the preceding article, Sarah describes the contrast between “Little America” where international students live and the vibrancy of Dakar.
Reflections from a Foreign Student

As I write this, I am still in the middle of my American experience, I am still living firsthand this American adventure, my spirit and my soul are still set on the Michigan way. So, without the necessary objectivity that such work requires and without the benefit of the hindsight, I am confronted with a difficult situation.

I don’t know how it all will end, the way it will, where it will, and even why it will. The only sure thing in my disorientated spirit is that nine months ago I packed my life in two suitcases and knew it was the right choice.

Thousands of miles away from home in a place named Kalamazoo, my new life started. KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN. What a beautiful name, it is so nice to pronounce it, it is such a pleasure to whisper it. To me it sounds like a poem by Carl Sandburg. And it is in this place full of magic that I learned what it means to be a foreign student.

I remember, I can still see this young man, shy, quiet, concentrated, confused, this adolescent thrown, like someone from a different planet, into a universe with mysterious language, habits, and customs. An unknown and stunning universe. An America that was no longer a mirage but a harsh yet smooth reality, a naive and complex reality, a reality full of violence and tenderness. I didn’t belong to this America, I didn’t understand it, I wasn’t foreign to it. And I recall that at first I suffered, I couldn’t stand it, I couldn’t accept it, I couldn’t change this environment that wasn’t mine.

I couldn’t accept being treated and viewed as a foreigner, I couldn’t change my blood or my accent. The most I could do was to model my behavior after Americans. I wanted to be American like everybody around me, like the freshmen, the sophomores, the juniors, and the ones that understood me the best, the seniors. Integrating myself was the only way to survive the huge loneliness that was looming.

But on the other hand, I was carried away here, in this charming little campus, so beautiful, so perfect that I could barely breathe the day I discovered it. I was carried away because I was far from France, far from my parents, my brothers, my friends. I was carried away because I was so lucky to live something that few people do. Lucky to see the country I dreamed of during hundreds of sleepless nights. Lucky to feel closer to Hemingway, London, and Faulkner. Lucky because I had the opportunity to answer the call of America.

With these mixed feelings haunting me and aware that each day would be a “constant battle just to stay between the shores,” I couldn’t wait to dive into the mighty American river to be molded and Americanize myself as much as possible, trying to be like John, Dave, or Jason.

However at the beginning, it was hard. I didn’t understand what was said, the words, the sentences, the expressions. What was made, the gestures, and the conduct. What was worn, the clothes, the colors. Everything had to be translated. It was scary, but at the same time it stimulated me and filled my heart with happiness and desire. Because I didn’t have the guts or the honesty to ask for an explanation, lest that I would be belittled or made fun of, I had to fake that I already knew everything. Simulating constantly inside the social microcosm that is the campus. It was tiresome, it was a new way of learning things that you already knew, it was like learning how to write with the other hand. I tried to progress slowly in this new environment where colors were not exactly like they used to be at home.

Therefore I lived intensely each moment of each day in a world where fear follows marvel and marvel follows fear. A foreign world that is transforming you because it teaches you how to become an adult, how to fight in order to survive in a society that isn’t yours. A foreign world that makes you understand that a woman can change your well-organized life forever and that without love the sun doesn’t exist. A foreign world that shows you how a teacher or friends can give you lessons of moral and good sense. A foreign world where you show your feelings when you are confronted with loneliness, the still of the night or new dangers. A foreign world where you are humiliated but also acclaimed. A foreign world where you have to give up your ideas and understand the others’. A foreign world where all the discoveries that I made throughout the seasons in this land of enchantment changed the adolescent that I was into a man.

In this foreign world, America, I made the transition from childhood to adulthood, and moreover in Kalamazoo, Michigan, as I was moving from adolescence, life revealed itself to me. I may have left my heart in this country but I gained my spirit. I suppose certain experiences are universal and that “the very condition of being human is not given but learned.” For me, living abroad was the best way to understand that condition.

Yannick Greiner is an international relations and economics double major at the Université de Strasbourg in Strasbourg, France. He spent his junior year studying at Kalamazoo College.
Poems from Otavalo

The following are two poems written about the central market of Otavalo Ecuador, where the indigenous cooperative of Otavalanians sells its world famous wool textiles. This group has been cited in anthropological writings as the best example of native peoples maintaining their culture while profiting from dominant cultures. I attempt to capture the atmosphere and colorful sites of the market and its craftspeople.

Otavalo

A rainbow crashed
to the cement
sending colors
spilling across the ground
and bouncing into the air
to hang
in natural cloth,
and we walked, weaving
between the native figures
of a woolen tapestry.

Buying the Tapestry

A baby sucked
at her mother's breast
pulled above the birds and the flowers
embroidered brightly
on the Otavalan whites
as the mother and I
haggled
a price to suit
us both, and only when the infant
finished her meal
did we agree.

Biology major Julie Howard '94 studied in Quito, Ecuador for six months last fall and winter. These “Poems from Otavalo” were written after a weekend trip to Otavalo.
Communicating on a Global Scale

Dr. Milton and Janet Bennett are the directors of The Institute for Intercultural Communication located in Portland, Oregon. The institute is designed to provide professional training and development for people who work in multicultural and international environments hoping to improve cultural differences and minimize conflicts among various cultural groups. Participants engage in workshops and discussion groups learning new theories and concepts regarding intercultural issues.

Kalamazoo College Director of Foreign Study Michael Vande Berg and Associate Director Joseph Brockington recently participated in the program. Many of the new philosophies and theories presented at the predeparture orientation program at Kalamazoo College are modeled after the institute.

Dr. Milton Bennett received his Ph.D. in intercultural communication from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis after serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Micronesia. He has devoted his career to developing theory and training methods to promote intercultural communication. Dr. Bennett, along with his wife, are currently conducting diversity programs for multicultural university campuses and for corporations with multicultural workforces. He is the author of several articles on intercultural theory and training and has also co-authored the revised edition of American Cultural Patterns.

In the following interview, Dr. Bennett shared his thoughts and theories about the study of intercultural communication, briefly touching on his own foreign study experience.

You are the co-director of The Institute for Intercultural Communication. What is meant by intercultural communication?

What we mean by intercultural communication is the study of face-to-face interaction between different cultures. The key to intercultural communication is that there is some kind of interaction between people who are culturally different. What intercultural communication is not is the study of economic or political systems. It’s not looking at the big level but it’s looking more at how people are relating to people.

Could you give some examples of what you examine when studying intercultural communication?

There are several things we look at when we analyze face-to-face interaction.

One is a major difference in values. This is a difference between, in general, American emphasis on individualism, of seeing yourself as an individual, as a self-reliant individual—comparing that to many other cultures that believe in the group or collectivist orientation.

This is very important when we study the differences between Japanese and American people. The Japanese are much more collectivist in their orientation than Americans, who are much more individualistic. This means that Japanese people tend to examine issues in terms of how it affects the larger group, while Americans tend to examine issues on how it affects the immediate or the individual.

Another aspect we study is the difference in nonverbal behavior. For example, differences in eye contact. Do people look at each other when they talk? For instance, people from Asian countries and also Native American Indians tend not to have that much eye contact. This often leads to misinterpretations by Americans or Europeans.

A third area we look at is communication style. Here, an example might be being direct or indirect in how you approach a point. Americans, in general, think that it’s important to be honest—honest meaning to say what is on your mind and say it directly to the person who is involved. We don’t always do it, but this is kind of the best way to do it from an American viewpoint. For many other cultures, for example Hispanic and Asian cultures, this is not considered the best way at all. But instead what you should do is simply suggest something, that is to be subtle and suggest a point. Perhaps not even going directly to the person, but go to a third person. The reason for doing this is not to lose face. This particular difference is very common, by the way, with students in academic settings.

What specifically should people understand when studying intercultural communication?

There are three basic ideas that we think are important for people to know about when studying intercultural communication.

The first is cultural self-awareness. People need to be aware of their own culture. If you are not aware of your own culture, you don’t see the filters that you’re using to interpret other things.

Second, people need to know something about other people’s cultures, of course—the values, beliefs, and nonverbal communication style of the people. And of course, knowing the language.

Third is understanding the processes of cultural adaptations. Here there are a number of issues. One that operates a lot is culture shock. What does that mean? And how does it work? Another issue is becoming bicultural and who is more likely to become bicultural. It is understanding that becoming bicultural is a good thing—just like becoming bilingual is a good thing.

What is the study of economic or political systems? It’s not looking at the big level but it’s looking more at how people are relating to people.
Some people may argue that a person will not be totally immersed into a new culture if they are prepared for it prior to traveling. How would you respond?

This is a very common feeling of many students and professors that this will somehow detract to the experience of new culture to learn too much beforehand. Yes we have a strong feeling about that. It’s based on the work of a psychologist named George Kelley. He says experience is not a function of being in the vicinity of events when they occur. Rather, he says, experience is the function of how you construe those events or how you interpret those events. Let’s say your desire is to have a French experience, otherwise you’re just going to have an American experience in the vicinity of French events. How would you have a French experience? You have to have it by learning how to interpret the events around you in a French way. That is the way you’re going to have a French experience—not just by being there with nothing but your American frame of reference. If you do no preparation and have no idea of how to look at the world in a French way, then you will have an American experience in the vicinity of French events.

The more prepared you are, the more you know about your own culture—because you understand the filters that you’re using and the more you know about French culture, values, beliefs, behavior patterns, and communication—the more you’re able to interpret the world around you and thus the more French your experience is going to be. If you want to have a cross-cultural experience as part of your study abroad program, then learning absolutely everything you can about yours and the culture will at least give you a start.

You’ve spent more than fifteen years of your life researching and developing different theories about intercultural communication, why is it so important to you?

I think probably it is because of my first cross-cultural experience, which was when I was in the Peace Corps. In the orientation program we had a very good language program, but they basically told us there was no culture, that everyone was kind of Americanized. And although they spoke this other language, everyone was kind of Americanized. This turned out to be grossly inaccurate. In fact, it took me a good part of the year to figure out basic things that were going on, before I could begin learning about anything significant for the next year.

And I made the commitment at that time. If people are going to be in other cultures or be around other cultures, they really need to understand what that is. Because there is so much more that we could be doing and so much more we could be learning. We can avoid making all kinds of mistakes and do a better job with whatever it is we are doing if we understand what the differences are.

After coming home, I earned my Ph.D. in a program dealing with intercultural communication at the University of Minnesota. And that is what I’ve been doing ever since.

A Short Nap
Photograph by Ashley Harris
A man catches a short break during a weekend horse fair in Jerez de la Frontera. Ashley Harris ’94, a biology major with a concentration in environmental studies, spent the spring in Madrid, Spain. She hopes to return after graduation to teach English.

Associate Editor Erin Miller ’95, an English major, will travel to Aberdeen, Scotland this fall for a six-month foreign study program. Associate Editor Kezia Pearlman ’95 will study for six months in Cáceres, Spain. She is an English major with a concentration in women’s studies.
Learn to live with uncertainty." These words rang in my ears at the end of last summer after a full quarter of orientation meetings with Dr. Joe Fugate. I remember my initial reaction to his challenge to us, his final group: "What the hell is that supposed to mean?" Frankly, I thought that was what these meetings were all about—to cover every contingency, to predict all possible outcomes, and to remove all uncertainty. If that wasn't what they were for, why did my butt get so sore in those pews for two or three hours every Wednesday? What a disclaimer, I thought—just in case he missed something, he can cover it with this one simple sentence. As I reflect now though, after six months of living in Germany and traveling through Europe, I realize that it wasn't Dr. Fugate who was missing something and that his simple statement contained much more than just a disclaimer.

Looking back at foreign study orientation, I possessed so much desire to precisely define the undefined and to accurately answer the unanswered that I discarded as unwanted the vital and natural element of uncertainty. My reactions to Dr. Fugate’s send-off verified this refusal; I didn’t want to hear that there would be circumstances that I could not predict. The unknown and unanswerable were too scary—after all, I had no basis within my previous experiences with which to handle uncertainty. Ironically, it was precisely in those times of uncertainty on foreign study when I experienced the most. It was during those times that I was compelled to discard all of my accumulated thoughts and ideas and, in the words of Nike, to “just do it.” With no previous foundation on which to place the experience (besides knowledge of one and a half languages and a smattering of culture), the doing overtook the thinking, and it just happened. Whether it was the long weekend in Paris or the awe of Barcelona, the acknowledgement of the completely new situation allowed me to drop all inhibitions and to just experience. No matter how corny Nike’s sales pitch sounds, I now realize how something as simple as learning to accept, and even to appreciate, uncertainty helped make my foreign study experience—and indeed my current experiences—that much more enjoyable.

A Memorial in Berlin
Photograph by Heather Carstens
An original section of the Berlin Wall, which has subsequently become a memorial, reads, “Man cannot create a culture from political ideology, but perhaps out of culture he can fashion his politics.”
Long hallways abound and intersect to form vaultlike spaces in the Madrid subway. In some of those spaces are gypsies and Moroccan immigrants with funky clothes and jewelry to sell. There are ragged people with big hearts and cheap instruments, some of whom are much too talented to be playing underground. The spectrum of people represented there is vast. I’ve seen business men and women, school children, lovers, grandparents, and homeless people. This story is about one of those individuals.

I was short on cash when I noticed that there were too many clothes in my closet. Foreign study in Madrid is not cheap. So I gathered together some of my least favorite possessions, added a sheet and a book, and threw it all in a backpack. “Anyone could sell these sharp American threads in the subway,” I reasoned. Actually, the opportunity to people watch was excuse enough to go.

The trains took me to a stop in the system where there were sure to be plenty of potential customers hurrying about. I quickly located the prime spot for my business across the way from a Moroccan man selling watches. With care and precision I displayed some Levi’s and shirts on the sheet as I had seen my fellow subway salesmen do. Then I sat down and waited.

It soon became clear that few Madrileños were interested in my wares, but I was not disturbed. The people watching was fine and my book was entertaining. While reading a not-so-entertaining page, I looked up to see a young woman walking toward me. Her face was filthy and her hair unkempt. Her clothes were torn and mismatched. My eyes must have been scanning her every aspect when they fell solidly upon the two small grocery bags she was carrying.

How many days of begging had it taken her to buy those basic necessities? Suddenly she caught me staring. With a natural smile she eased away my embarrassment. I couldn’t help but smile back. My similarly shabby appearance—old worn out clothes and long greasy hair—must have made her feel more comfortable with my presence because she walked over and crouched beside me.

In a soft, gentle voice she asked, “Are you hungry? Do you want some?” I couldn’t believe it. A homeless person was offering me food because she had caught me staring at her groceries. Intense shame and embarrassment completely overwhelmed me. “No really, I’m fine,” I stammered. It was breaking my heart. I should have been offering her something, not vice versa. But she grasped my hand and quietly insisted. “Honestly, I don’t need anything,” I said in my most sincere tone. There was a pause. Then, still holding my hand and looking directly into my eyes, she told me, “We all need.”

She separated that tiny collection of food into two neat halves, and my eyes began to water. It was less than two weeks before Christmas and this angel had given me so much more than the cheese and bread that lay before me. I turned my head, but I couldn’t keep from looking back to her. More protest would have only been hurtful.

We talked awhile about poets and musicians, and she informed me that there was a wonderful violinist nearby. He was also her friend. She asked for a goodbye kiss, and for a split second I noticed the dirt smear. Then, still feeling silly for having noticed, I planted a big kiss on her cheek. With a smile that seemed to come from the inside, she stood up. I watched her walk away.

Scott Hunsinger '94, who spent six months in Madrid, Spain, is a Spanish major with minors in social studies and education. He plans to receive a secondary education certificate and teach either Spanish or English as a second language.
Foreign Study: Thirty Years Ago

The class of 1965 was the first to be totally immersed in a new experiment called the "K" Plan. From the moment we arrived on campus our first year, we were the guinea pigs for the new quarter system, with its career development, foreign study, and Senior Individualized Projects. Amazingly, that plan is still virtually unchanged thirty years later. I was one of a few in my class to elect a single quarter of foreign study as a sophomore in Münster, Germany in the spring of 1963, rather than wait until the normal fall-winter program during the junior year.

Our group flew to New York by jet where we were supposed to connect with a KLM flight to Amsterdam, paid for by the college. Filled with anticipation, excitement, and maybe a little lack of confidence, we wondered just what we were getting ourselves into. When we found our KLM gate and looked out the window of the terminal, we saw an old propeller aircraft sitting just outside. Was that relic really our plane? Didn’t it look a little like the left engine was about to fall off? Surely the College wouldn’t fly us all the way across the Atlantic in that thing! As it turned out, they did. We made it, but at the time it seemed only slightly faster than the ocean passenger liners that the majority of the class used to go to Europe the following fall. We stopped along the way to refuel in the British Isles since the plane couldn’t make it all the way across the Atlantic. While they refueled, the group had to stay on the plane, since customs wouldn’t let us off to temporarily stretch our cramped legs. Finally we reached Amsterdam after about twenty cooped up hours on a plane of questionable air worthiness.

As we rode the bus to Münster the following day, our next challenge was the realization that we would be meeting our assigned families very soon. What would they be like? Would we remember the German that Dr. Gunther Spaltmann had so patiently taught us the preceding quarter? After we arrived at the town hall our names were called one by one to meet our host families. The excitement grew until my name was called. Dr. Spaltmann introduced me to my family, and I suddenly could not remember a single word of German. Wie geht’s? I panicked. Fortunately, Dr. Spaltmann did not flunk me on the spot and very graciously helped me remember a few words of greetings to my host family. My German host mother and her teenage son were also very helpful, since they knew far more English than I knew German. On many occasions during my stay with them, they felt sorry for me and would translate a phrase or two into English. They had taken in Kalamazoo students before and they cared for each one as an individual.

As we all settled into the daily routine of classes, family living, and some short weekend trips around the area, our German improved, and we began to feel at ease. Any lack of confidence was easily overcome by the knowledge that our small group from “K” was in this thing together. However, there was nothing even remotely American in Germany in 1963: no McDonald’s, no Coca-Cola, or anything familiar. Phone calls to parents back home were out of the question back then, since trans-Atlantic calls would have cost a fortune. Air mail letters were our only link with home.

My host family had a television set, but no refrigerator. This always struck me as odd, but most Germans at the time were used to buying only the food that was needed for each day, so they never felt a need for a refrigerator. Our apartment was large enough that I had my own room. Every room was heated with a small coal stove from each apartment’s coal supply in the basement of the building. They often didn’t heat at all in the spring, so the temperature in the apartment was often sixty degrees Fahrenheit or less. I found this okay for sleeping, but a problem when studying. I ended up using a little more than my allocation of coal trying to warm up a bit and often felt guilty when retrieving an extra bucket of coal now and then.

The food served by my host family always seemed to have sausage of some type, which I grew to hate. Also I was accustomed to having something to drink with meals, but they never did. They said that mixing food with a beverage would cause terrible things to happen to the stomach. Finally, I decided to ignore their pleas and got my own glass of water to drink with meals. For several days, they kept watching for me to develop peculiar symptoms. Later on they just let me go on doing my strange foreign thing without comment.

By the time our classes ended and it was time to start traveling for three weeks, we were all proud of our German and anxious to see as much of Europe as we could in our allotted time. One of our group bought a used Mercedes. Three of us decided to join him, and we split the travel expenses. I think he planned to ship it back to the U.S. after our travel, but after three weeks of constant breakdowns, I believe he ended up selling it before leaving Europe. I vividly remember the first time we pulled into a German gas station. In our best German, we pleasantly asked the attendant to fill up the tank. He responded in impeccable English: “Did you say you want me to fill your gas tank?” Maybe our German still needed a little polish.

Despite spending what seemed to be the majority of our time pushing the car to the nearest Mercedes dealer for repairs, we managed to see quite a bit of Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. More
often than not we discovered that the dealer was closed. There seemed to be a national holiday every time we needed to fix the car. At least once the four of us spent the night sleeping in the car in front of a Mercedes dealer until it opened the next morning. The Mercedes was very old and didn’t have nearly as much interior room as the smallest sub-compacts of today. By morning the four of us were so cramped it was nearly impossible to walk up to the front door of the dealer. Driving did have its advantages though, since we could go anywhere and see virtually anything we wanted.

Berlin, our first travel adventure, was probably the most exciting part of the entire journey. At the time, Berlin was in the middle of East Germany, and East-West tensions were very high. We weren’t sure how our trip would work out, but other than a few tense moments at the borders, there were no problems since we had American passports. The border guards warned us not to take any pictures while traveling on the Autobahn in East Germany. As it turned out there wasn’t much to take pictures of anyway, except many armored vehicle convoys. Of course, we snuck in a couple of photos anyway.

Berlin was a study in contrasts. The Wall was not very old at that time, but it was a very vivid reminder of the huge difference between East and West. In one place along the Wall, someone on the western side had painted the words: *Es gibt nur ein Berlin!* There is only one Berlin! Standing near the Wall on the western side we noticed many people hanging their heads out of old buildings several blocks away on the eastern side. On our side people were standing on top of a small building. Each group just stared across the Wall at the group on the other side. We wondered what was going on. Finally, someone explained that these were families that had been separated when the Wall was built. The families came at the same time each day to look across at each other since neither East nor West Germans were allowed to cross to the other side. This was their only means of “contact.”

We could have driven the Mercedes through the famous Checkpoint Charlie into East Berlin since we had American passports; however, after a little reflection, we decided to play it safe and take one of the commercial bus tours. At the border, the bus driver and tour guide were exchanged for their East German counterparts. The bus driver maneuvered through a maze of closely spaced thick, concrete walls, strategically placed to prevent anyone from escaping quickly by car. The East was very drab, with ugly, filthy old buildings, although the tour bus took special care to only show the best parts of town. It seemed that the only sites that they wanted us to see were the enormous Russian monuments to their soldiers who died during World War II. Although our tour was incomplete we still felt that traveling in East Berlin was quite an adventure.

At the Brandenburg Gate near the Wall, a scaffolding was being assembled to prepare for a visit from President Kennedy who would be arriving soon to deliver his famous “I am a Berliner” speech. A few days later I was lucky enough to see and photograph him in his motorcade in Bonn as he drove up and climbed into a helicopter to fly to Berlin.

After returning to West Germany using the same Autobahn, we turned southwest toward Switzerland and France. Naturally, along the way we visited the HofbräuHaus in Munich, drank lots of beer, and attempted to slip out with one of their famous large mugs without getting caught. However, the guards at each entrance made that a difficult feat to accomplish.

We often stayed in youth hostels since the cost was only one mark (about twenty-five cents at that time), and breakfast was included. They were set up with many beds in each room and had a strict lights-out policy at 10:00 p.m. This cramped our explorations of the local night life, making the cheap price less desirable. However, since we were traveling by car we sometimes found out of the way guest houses for very reasonable rates, especially in the mountains of Switzerland. This gave us the opportunity to explore some extremely beautiful side roads in the Swiss mountains.

After seeing many of the usual sights in central Europe, we found our way to Paris. Nobody would speak English or German, and we were getting tired and homesick. Traveling had lost its excitement. We all looked forward to some good, familiar American food, and home. Fortunately, it was time to return to Amsterdam and check into one of those ancient KLM prop planes for the trip back to New York. Being home again was wonderful, but the opportunity to study abroad was a truly unique experience that none of us have forgotten thirty years later.

Jack Bamberg ’65 graduated from Kalamazoo College with a bachelor’s degree in physics. He obtained his masters of science from Michigan State University and then found a job in the aerospace industry. He began working for Ball Aerospace in Boulder, Colorado twenty-one years ago, where he designed optical systems for space vehicle instruments.
Aspirin, America?

One thousand-one hundred to one.
The current rate of the anorexic ruble to the U.S.
dollar.
1.63, I think it was, dollars to the ruble, 1986.
I got there one year after the peaceful overthrow of
sympathetic economics. 1992, August, 197 rubles to the
dollar.

1992: Price of a loaf of bread: 20 R;
Price of a jar of pickles: 80 R;
Price of ten eggs: 100 R;
Price of a bottle of vodka: 150 R;
Average monthly salary of the Russian wage earner:
3000 R. Roughly 15 dollars per 30 days of life.

Enter Capitalism, exeunt Socialism;
Enter Pizza Hut, McDonald’s, Marlboro, Pepsi-Cola
and Hollywood, exeunt controlled wages, state run
transportation, secure prices, and a stable lifestyle.
Enter America, exeunt Mother Russia.

"Hey well, somebody’s gotta tell them how to do it,"
say my sickly trite group members. "I mean, after all this
‘O’-pression, they haven’t the slightest idea how to earn a
living."

True, they don’t. Until now, they’d never needed to.
Now they must forage for themselves. They must
learn to pimp their neighbors and guard their belongings.
They must brainwash their kin and themselves. They
must professionalize, organize, and terrorize. So say we,
members of the elite first world and walkers on the
ground of gold. Silver spoons protruding from our
latently herpetic mouths, we console them in their penury,
an opportunity to aid a struggling new world. More
hands, greater resources, virgin land—but most of all—
brains, tons of them, waiting to be fed our Western
rhetoric. "Got an ailment? For a million bucks and your
kidney you can try this." Why ask why? Just do it, Russia.

I think my brain hurt constantly my first four weeks
in St. Petersburg. I sat staring blankly out my large square
window at the industrial wire-structure of a landscape,
and thought about our country and theirs. Lots of snow
there. Dirty grays, washed-out pinks, sandy yellows, and
faded light blues provide a muted watercolor backdrop
for the millions of empty faces that crowd doorways.
Milk, fish, and meat stores hum with the undulations of
flesh and cloth. Walls of people, standing, waiting to fork
over a meager 1/10 of their salary for a little bit of noth-
ing—quite a different world from our billboard-scarred,
television-laden American safety perch. We’ve everything
we need here: food, cars, gasoline, jobs...money. Thank
God we have money; couldn’t do much without it. In

fact—hey man—we too must eat. And consume we do.
Anything and everything we can get our grubby little
hands on: Twinkies, Ho-hos, Nikes, Nintendos, CDs,
Sonys, Hitachis, Pontiacs. Thank God we have money.
"Somebody’s got to teach them how to earn a living."

About this time every day of my first four weeks in
St. Petersburg, I would open my desk drawer, pore over
my Gillette, Ivory, and Tylenol looking for a cure to my
sudden head throb: Tylenol for colds, Advil for head-
aches, Nuprin for yellow and “differentness,” and Motrin
for back pain. Such a simple choice. Robotically now—
look at Advil, tilt head back, gulp, swallow...ahh. Fog
mostly cleared before the slick, tan panacea hits belly.
Amazing this stuff.

"Ben, why you that did do?" usually followed next.
(The Russian language has no strict word order, and
hence makes for quite a comedy in translation—my drift
you catch?)

Oh. Just a headache Alyosha, nothing much.
"What that was?"
That was...an aspirin, an’American cure-all.
"You always that are doing."
And so it’s true. I think we have more cures here for
more fabricated problems than anywhere else in the
world. Our big brains have created a solution to every-
thing imaginable. A solution that, more often than not,
ends up worsening instead of solving the problem. In
Russia, the old wives tell them to just do a shot of vodka:
Sore throat? Vodka and honey. Sick to your stomach?
Vodka and milk. Cough? Vodka and pepper. Runny nose?
Vodka and lemon.
Ya’ want one Alyoshia?
"Thanks, no."

Peculiarly, the Russian people call themselves
khlebisolnii. A word meaning roughly “bread-and-saltish,”
derived from the custom of inviting strangers into their
homes and offering food and shelter. A custom that,
though not as widespread as before the August ’91
revolution, is still deeply ingrained in the Soviet heart. I
was welcomed many times by a table overflowing with
meats and breads, stacked high with cheese and gar-
nished with caviar. At a time when such a meal costs
virtually a full months salary, this comes as quite a
statement. All 3,000 rubles paid in exchange for one night
of entertainment. It’s nothing, they’ll say, spooning
borscht into your bowl.

We Americans, on the other hand, are materialistic
and practical. We know how to manage our money. We
can budget. We are so, to such a ridiculous extent, that
even our temporal existence has an opportunity cost:
Time is money. We wouldn’t think of breaking our bank
accounts to entertain a few straggling strangers for a
single evening at home. We’d much rather spend it on stuff that will last: goods, tokens of our fortune, or status symbols. Our homeless are our nameless—our inhuman, unreal creatures. Our policy is “no property, no vote.” For us, not to retain and store these goods and tokens is to run the risk of losing our identity. In essence—we are what we own.

“Them crazy Russkis can’t do anything right. Somebody’s got to tell them, got to show them how to straighten things out.”

In roll the TV people, the advertisers, the lawyers, the businessmen, the big wigs, the zoot suits, and the head honchos. A quick makeover while the curtain’s down. “We’ll have you fixed up in no time ma’am. Nothin’ to worry about. Nothin’ at all,” squeals the CPA eagerly clutching his clipboard.

One thousand-three hundred to one. The soon-to-be rate of the anorexic ruble to the U.S. dollar.

If Western brain power and ingenuity can’t ameliorate their problem, nothing can. Personally, I think they just need to drink more vodka.

Aspirin, America?

From Frogner Park
Lithograph by Penny Olmstead
While in Oslo, Norway Penny Olmstead ’93, photographed many statues in Frogner Park. She made this lithograph based on those photographs by printing from a glass plate onto cotton-base paper.
Walking in Cánovas

In this land where time
normally seems as significant
as one fallen plum
in a midsummer orchard,
I am seventeen minutes late
and it will be noticed.

It will be noticed because
I am late for comida,
the traditional family meal,
in the house I will briefly
know as mine.

I am seventeen minutes late for
too-slowly-eating my salad with
tomatoes and salt and vinegar
while José Manuel eagerly devours
two chicken breasts, half a loaf of bread,
and three homemade sausages.

I am seventeen minutes late for
loud, confusing conversations,
in which I am finally able to take part,
and for the even louder television set,
which pirouettes these conversations
from Hillary Clinton to Felipe Gonzalez
to a Michael Jackson concert in Budapest.

I am seventeen minutes into a walk
in this hazy park where palm trees
entwine intimately with pines,
where groups of women in knee-length
dresses and black leather shoes
coo at shiny babies in strollers, where
the too-green grass, which I am not allowed
to touch, mocks the wine-blushed stones
as they roughly caress my feet.

I walk slowly.
I think of how I am lost in this country
of strangers who kiss my cheeks, unchained dogs
who weave maniacally around me, kids who know
only cement backyards but still never
seem to have skinned knees.

After too long, I realize that I am also found
in this city of long afternoons and sunshine,
gnarled buildings and fourteenth-century roses.
I begin to smile at staring strangers.
I want to memorize every stone I pass.

I move my comforted body
toward the seven polished rooms
that I have come to call home,
toward the three laughing people
whom I have learned to know as family.

I try to drag
this fragile time
into forever,
as I listen bravely
to the steaming echoes
of the sun-steeped air.

At a Feria del Caballo
Photograph by Ashley Harris
Dressed in a traditional riding outfit, this
young boy takes a break from braiding a
horse’s tail at a fair in Jerez de la Frontera,
near Seville.

English major Deidra K. Razzaque ’94 studied in Cáceres, Spain. She plans to apply for a Watson Fellowship, hoping to return to Spain.
Farther than Florida

Spring 1993

I cannot believe it—I am halfway through my internship in London. Time is flying by, and now that I have finally settled and realize what is going on, I am going to have to leave. Going back to Kalamazoo and reality does not sound very appealing right now. I do not want to have to deal with homework and stressing about exams again.

I am undecided how I feel about London. On one hand, I love the excitement and uniqueness of living in a foreign city on my own. It is quite a change for me. I went right from living at home with my parents to a residence hall at "K." The farthest I have ever been from Michigan were winter vacations to Florida. But on the other hand, living here has made me appreciate my family and friends. I guess the dollar-a-minute phone calls make me realize how much I love to talk to them. It is so reassuring to hear a familiar voice of someone that knows and understands me.

I am positive that this was the best experience in my life so far. I am more confident in my ability to get through anything. People called me crazy when I told them that I was going to London to live for three months without a job, a place to live, and without knowing a soul. When they told me this, it went in one ear and out the other. This fact did not hit me until five minutes before the plane landed in Gatwick, England, and by that time it was too late to turn back—I am thankful now.

Even though I miss my friends back at home, the friends that I have made here will definitely last a lifetime. We have experienced things here that no one at home could imagine. Experiences like learning to drive on the wrong side, day trips to the countryside, walks in the parks, meeting people from Mongolia to Sweden and everywhere in between, wild nights and mornings after, when we wake up to find that we have spent a whole week's paycheck on one night out. All the simple things that I take for granted at home turn into ordeals here, and it makes me realize how different everyone is and motivates me to learn more.

Abbey Road
Photograph by Jamie Kozma
The wall outside the studio in London where the Beatles recorded Abbey Road has become scrawled with graffiti by Beatles fans. Jamie Kozma '94, a French and international area studies major, studied in Caen for six months and plans to return to France this fall to do her Senior Individualized Project on the social and bureaucratic aspects of abortion in France.

Susan Williams '95 did her career development internship in London as a temporary administrative assistant for the London Underground. She is a political science and international area studies double major and will go on foreign study this fall for six months in Münster, Germany.
Beyond the Mimes and Post Cards...

Certain moments during my time abroad evoked a profound sense of awe—the "reality check" moments, I called them, in which I looked around amazed at being twenty years old and traveling Europe. At certain times I wanted to drink everything in with all my senses and inscribe that moment in my memory so I would never forget that particular slice of experience. One such time was on a train heading south to Marseilles from Clermont-Ferrand in February. The trees were covered in a deep frost as we wound our way past icy rivers and craggy mountains. Another was in the bar of an artists' commune in East Berlin, drinking German beer and watching a punk band from Amsterdam. These snapshots of memory, these moments of "reality check," were brief flickers of intense realization not only of my great privilege of having such diverse experiences, but also of the incredible beauty and meaning life can have if we let it.

Most of these "reality checks" were isolated fragments of heightened experience throughout my journeys, existing one moment and then disappearing only to be experienced again in my memory. The exception was the feeling I found each time I visited Montmartre in Paris. At the risk of sounding cliché, Paris in general, and Montmartre in particular, was filled with magic for me each time I visited.

My mother came to see me at Christmas for a week. I met her at Roissy airport and for the next three days we did the typical Paris tourist stuff nonstop. On her first night in Paris I took Mom to Montmartre. I had been there once before in high school and remembered how much I had loved it then. Moreover, when discussing with my host mother what to do in Paris, she told me that I absolutely could not allow my mother to leave Paris without seeing the Place de Tertres, the square next to the Basilique du Sacré-Coeur where all the artists congregate to sell their work. So, being the official tour guide since my mother does not speak French, I dragged her up the hill of Montmartre, with her complaining all the way, "I'm too old for this!"

"Mother, you are not too old. Now come on! You'll love it."

We finally made it up the long trek to the top of Montmartre. After looking through the post cards in the cheesy tourist shops, we made our way to the Place de Tertres where I persuaded Mom to stop at a café for an overpriced cup of coffee.

"Come on, Mom, you have to do it just so you can say you sat in a café in Montmartre."

It was there that my mom got her first sight of snooty French waiters. I tried to play it cool like I was used to their snootiness, even though I was inwardly seething at being responded to in English when the waiter heard my American accent.

Once we warmed up inside the café, we ventured into the Sacré-Coeur. Not being very religious, I am always amazed at the awe I feel when I enter the silence and see the flickering candles inside the dark, stony expanse of the interior of the basilica. The awe becomes intensified when I walk out onto the steps and look out over the skyline of Paris by night.

After having climbed up all those steps and paying an exorbitant price for the privilege of being served by the snooty French guy, after snapping several pictures and, in general, being tourists, Mom and I finally reached the primary, dynamic part of travel. We stood looking out over what I consider the most beautiful, alive city in Europe, silent in contemplation of our essential humanity and our place in relation to the rest of the world and its history.

Montmartre is the kind of place that one has to share with someone else. Just as I had shared it with my mother on her first trip to Europe, I shared it again a month later with my friend Bryan, an American student from South Carolina whom I had met in Clermont.

Bryan and I were on our way to Munich for a weekend and had a six-hour stopover in Paris before catching our night train East. As night drew near after having our fill of couscous in a little Algerian hole-in-the-wall restaurant and peering into the windows of shops that we couldn't afford, I asked Bryan if she had ever been to Montmartre. When she said no, I told her she absolutely had to see it. Being an art major and all-around funky-creative type, I knew that she would love it as much as I did. As expected, I heard the same complaints from Bryan on the way up the hill as I had from my mom (albeit a bit more colorful coming from Bryan).

"This had better be good, Pagel. I don't haul my ass up a damn hill just for anything."

I just smiled and watched with satisfaction when I saw her eat her words of doubt once we reached the top. We did the same cheesy shops and everything that I had done with my mom (minus the café since Mom wasn't there to foot the bill). I knew Bryan would love the Place de Tertres, with all its artists and mimes. In fact, I received a letter from her recently describing how she continued the tradition of leading a friend up the hill of Montmartre when she returned to Paris with another American student. "A mime hugged me as part of his act," she wrote. "It was humiliating! I loved it!"

Bryan and I sat on the steps of the Sacré-Coeur for about an hour before finally leaving for our train. On those steps I discovered for a brief moment a bit of the
beauty and possibilities this life has the potential of reaching. We sat looking out over the skyline of Paris, talking about life and art and love. We bummed a cigarette from two German guys and looked at each other and said, "This is the shit," which was our way of saying that, for a moment at least, on those steps of the Sacré-Coeur with a bummed cigarette and our friendship between us, we had discovered what it meant to live.

The Sacred Heart
Photograph by Deanne Bartkowiak
The Basilique du Sacré-Coeur in Paris, built between 1873 and 1910, features touches of Romanesque and Byzantine architecture beneath its distinctive Oriental dome. Associate Editor Deanne Bartkowiak '94, an English and mathematics double major with a minor in education, studied in Cáceres, Spain for six months.
Watching the Seasons

Our plan for the day: a drive in the Auvergnat countryside to visit my host mom’s mother. It was almost like being at home. “Did you bring your sunglasses? A warmer coat? Will you grab the bananas? My mother loves them and the potassium’s good for her,” Gisèle chirped. We drove from the valley where Clermont-Ferrand is nestled, protected by the ancient volcanos. Knowing only the flatlands of Michigan, the contrast of the surrounding mountains of France made me feel safe: there’s a certain security in the ancient earth, a visible history that envelopes you and swallows you as you bustle from class to daily errands, only to look up into the seemingly infinite and mysterious hills.

We drove upwards on winding highways through the February sun, next to drizzling streams and impossibly green vegetation springing out of melting snowy mounds. Our conversation was difficult. Gisèle seemed very much related to her namesake: a taut, intuitive creature, swift, graceful and forever loping with the most open, beautiful gait. In contrast to my quiet seriousness, we seemed almost at odds. The more we talked the more amazing Gisèle became. She seemed a product of the land: sturdy and rugged, simple yet elusive, sage and sprightly. She was always in motion.

We wound through the mountains, and even from the television-like frame of the car’s windshield the expansiveness of the landscape rose and dipped around us, almost as if to swallow us up. Here, there was spaciousness. The early afternoon sun slanted its cool light on hills carpeted with trees, making brilliant the forests of dense green pines, patches of the bumpy-ended chestnut brown of barren oaks, aspens, and maples, and heather-like fields of the rich fuzzy-topped purple-maroon, supple in the bending breeze.

Gisèle had warned me that her village was small, but I was stunned when we arrived at about five cheese producing farms, all clustered together near the top of the hill. The houses were small and low, constructed out of Auvergne’s standard dark-tinted volcanic stone. Paths for the cows traced between houses and barns, families and families. As we climbed out of the car, what seemed like a hundred dogs yodeled, mostly unconcerned with us, but disgruntled by the car’s disturbance of their peace.

Walking into the kitchen, we interrupted Gisèle’s mother chopping onions on the benchlike wooden table with pots simmering on the old iron stove behind her. Gisèle introduced me to her parents as “la petite américaine,” but when I tried to speak I discovered that my thick American accent was almost impossible for them to follow. In lieu of communication, I sipped my water and watched the sunlight filter through the small window as they discussed the farm and family matters.

With work to be done, I trailed after Gisèle and her mother to the barn where Gisèle introduced me to the liquid-eyed cows and clucked at the chickens, especially the handsome rooster with a limp that she teased unmercifully. Searching around the kitchen, Gisèle’s mother shuffled the empty red wine bottle and Saint Nectaire cheese rind about on the dusty table to find the particular knife she wanted.

She strode to what looked like the tool shed and opened the heavy wooden doors, creaking the rusty hinges. Following gingerly after Gisèle and her mother, I peeked between them to see a huge iron hanger with upturned ends from which hung two sides of an evenly split hog, one balancing the weight of the other. The stomach lining glistened in its half-cavity and the raw red thigh muscle displayed matte strings of flesh, soon to be ham.

The dogs gathered around the door, sniffing expectantly. Gisèle’s mother fisted the knife and, eyeing the carcass sagely, carved the choicest slivers of solid white lard. They slipped off like rain. One piece here, another there, the largest chunk with the hairs still prickling on the surface, they were piled on a plate as Gisèle inspected each in her red mohair sweater and suede pumps.

Back inside the kitchen, Gisèle’s mother slipped them into a hot frying pan and the slivers melted like snow. Just next to the frying pan was a vat of blood, and as Gisèle’s mother repeatedly rinsed and salted pig intestines again and again, Gisèle explained that no part of the pig was to be wasted. Her mother was preparing boudin, blood sausage, her specialty and a delicacy in France.

After another glass of water, Gisèle invited me for a walk to see the rest of the farm. Strolling along the path where she used to herd the cows, I tried to imagine her at fifteen, the oldest of seven children, helping run her family’s farm. We climbed to the highest bluff of the mountain, dodging cow manure and straining against the breeze. At the highest incline we stopped abruptly, catching our breath. Before us, inside us, enveloping us at all sides was Auvergne in the late afternoon sun: lit, immense, ancient and every hill of which Gisèle knew par cœur, by heart. Gisèle spoke of how this spot was her favorite, sitting with her legs dangling over the bluff. Circling to capture the three-hundred-sixty-degree panorama instilled a feeling of solitude and freedom, a visual communion with the land that was meditative, hopeful. I imagined Gisèle with her hair blowing in the breeze, watching the seasons and the trees change. I wonder what she thought, what she imagined in those hills.

Associate Editor Anne Betzner ’94, an English major with a women’s studies concentration, studied in Clermont-Ferrand, France for six months.
Auschwitz says

tattered shoes,
thousands of dead
tongues forever crying
what have we done wrong?
you wore our soles thin
only white bone rock
unforgiving unfaltering underneath
you scuffed us and
beat us and
left us out in the cold
and

when you
found another pair
(Made in Jewland)
you laced us in blood
and threw us on the

growing glowing
pile pyre

if a thousand burning bodies
cannot thaw the ice from
your hideous grayflesh

they will
brand your bare feet with the
sin of our suffering

still

you
monsters
will
feel the scalding
flames of Hell

Brzezinka
Photograph by Deanne Bartkowiak
Brzezinka is one of three concentration
camps grouped under the name
“Auschwitz.” Today, some rooms of these
camps are still filled with the hair, shoes,
suitcases, and brushes of the four million
people who died there in Nazi gas
chambers.

Stephanie Kowalski ’94, an English and music double major, studied in Erlangen, Germany for six months last fall and winter. Someday she
would like to return to study or teach there.
In a Church Basement

An old man walked slowly toward the corner of the church where I was standing. In the second that his eyes met mine, I wondered what his life had been like in this unfamiliar place. I watched as he turned to the candles and to the crucifix above them. He stared up into the face of Christ. Closing his eyes, the old man sighed deeply and kissed his fingers. When he opened his eyes, he touched Christ’s foot, turned away, and slowly shuffled out into the courtyard. I thought of the simplicity of his movements, yet to him they had such meaning. A small part of me began to reach out to this strange culture, and I realized the effect the project, the ethnography, I was beginning could have on my view of the Spanish culture.

The ethnography, a sociological study of a particular aspect of the culture designed to thrust us into the middle of the culture we would be experiencing, was a new idea of the foreign study office. The students going to Spanish-speaking centers—Quito, Ecuador and Cáceres and Madrid in Spain—were “guinea pigs” for a new orientation program, which included the ethnographies. For a month we would explore a small part of the foreign society—such as a specific restaurant, a bakery, or any significant part of that culture—taking notes, interviewing people, and finally writing a paper.

Many of us guinea pigs experienced doubt as to how meaningful the ethnographies would be, and I began to think about everything the ethnography would entail. Foremost in my mind was the question of how I would find one at all, and I worried about how in the world I would manage to enter a strange place and make myself understood in Spanish that I wanted to inhabit their place of business for the next month to observe and conduct interviews.

My doubts continued through my first month in Madrid. It seemed to me that a society whose younger members seldom had jobs would not be very open to young foreigners working for only a month to do a sociological study. Of course, it was not required that we actually work for a business, so most of us opted to simply hang out in a particular location and gather as much information as possible from a spectator’s perspective. I was lucky. Through several suggestions, I found a place that allowed me to do more than observe from a distance; in fact, unless I took a vow of celibacy and surrendered all of my worldly possessions, I could not have had the opportunity to become more deeply involved.

I entered La Iglesia de Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro—The Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help—early one afternoon, wondering where I might find a priest among the statues, candles, and pews in the large, cathedral-like building. I thought maybe the offices would be located behind the altar, so I began to walk around to the back of the church. In between admiring the beautiful high ceiling and pillars and trying to calm my nerves, I noticed there seemed to be a mass going on. Looking more closely at the altar, I saw a flowing white dress and realized I had entered the church at a rather special, and for me awkward, moment. The significance of the fact that I had—only by coincidence—chosen the side instead of the center aisle to walk down was not lost on me; my heart began to beat faster. Losing my nerve to talk to anyone, I left, vowing to be more observant on the next try.

My second attempt was less nerve-racking and more successful. After finding the offices I talked to a very helpful priest who made me feel more comfortable about my Spanish. He explained that the youth masses at noon on Sundays were led by a youth choir. He was sure they would be excited to have a new member. Additionally, there were younger members of the church who every Wednesday night attended oraciones, informal services similar to youth group meetings in the United States.

The choir became less important when I attended my first oración. I made sure to arrive at the church before the oración began, early enough to speak with Father José, the priest in charge of the youth activities. He was one of the friendliest people I met in Spain, beginning by complimenting my Spanish and listening openly to my request to observe and become involved in the youth activities. More than happy to accept, he introduced me to Daniel and Luis, two young Spaniards who took it upon themselves to introduce me to their many friends who were entering the courtyard of the church. Remembering everyone’s name very quickly became an impossibility.

I soon lost track of Daniel and Luis, but another named Rafael took me into the candle-lit basement as the oración began. The oración consisted of prayer and song interspersed with periods of silence. I tried my best to understand everything and sing when I could. Toward the close of the service, Father José began another song as everyone joined in, and I found myself humming along without thinking. My heart jumped in surprise as I realized the melody was the same as a song that I had sung many times before in a church back home. Not only had that song crossed the border between religions—the church I had attended at home was Baptist while the Spanish church was Catholic—but had also traversed the Atlantic. That simple melody brought home and Spain a little closer together for me.

Once the oración had ended, Father José gathered everyone around in a circle to speak about upcoming
events and any news for the group. I began to get nervous again when I looked around the circle of about sixty people who could understand every word while I had to concentrate very hard to comprehend anything. My heart started beating faster, and I suppose I must have sensed what was about to happen. Father José looked in my direction, and I caught enough words to understand that he wanted me to introduce myself. My face turned bright red. I was speechless. Then I saw the look of encouragement in the eyes of Father José, and remembering the friendliness of the people I had met, I began to speak, my voice calm and smooth, the Spanish words flowing easily. I saw smiles of welcome around me.

I could not remember what I had said even a few minutes afterward, but I felt very proud and accomplished that night. Speaking a few words of introduction might seem simple to some, but it was my great achievement. I had entered a part of Spanish society and had begun to find a place for myself there.

Associate Editor Wendy Bamberg ’94, a biology major, spent her foreign study in Madrid, Spain for six months last fall and winter.
a scene from *symphonie monotonous*

CHARACTERS
IK
YOUDE
ZEE
COMMENTATOR

SETTING
Bare stage except for bench center, where IK, YOUDE, and ZEE sit, hands clasped with each other and heads bowed in attitudes of prayer. The COMMENTATOR sits in a chair facing stage left, staring blankly.

[Simple synopsis: The three main characters—IK ("I" in German pronounced with a strong accent); YOUDE ("you" with a German feminine ending); and ZEE (German for "she" with a slurred pronunciation)—tell stories to each other to help pass the time. Some of the main themes are depression, aging and the loss of memory, and the manipulation of time and the importance that human beings place on stories of origin. Also central to the play is the notion of claiming one's own space—of going out into the world alone, and building or participating in a larger community.

The short extract that follows is from Part Two of the play. In Part One, YOUDE has told a truncated version of the story of Ruth, from the Old Testament, likening Ruth's displacement from her home to the three women's. The three women do not know how they arrived in the room where they now sit, and they do not know how they will leave. ZEE wonders how the place was created—and if it ever was created, or just a collective figment of the women's imaginations: "Option four: This place has never been here, and we found it. Option five: This place has never been here, and we have not found it." All they can do is tell stories to pass the time.

ZEE's is a creation story, a part of which follows, describing her version of the way the space was created, out of chaos; the way the three women found their space; and a day in the life in the space. After ZEE, YOUDE says a monologue telling her version of a possible "life before the place" or a possible, personal memory from a probable past.

The "fourth perhaps imagined" ZEE talks about below is the COMMENTATOR—a goddess-mother-conscience figure in the play. "Thik" is "the" written as it would be spoken in Wales. Between the two "stories" is a short "tri"-ologue, which mentions people—most "dead"—from another possible past.]


Silence.
They are motionless.

IK [as a child]: Tee! Tee-ah! Raa!

Silence.

YOUDE: Yes. And Linda in floral print—

COMMENTATOR: Dead!—

ZEE: Theresa had her hair done—

COMMENTATOR: Dead!—

YOUDE: O, and what about Francis—

COMMENTATOR: Almost!—

ZEE: Mertyl, yes the dress, the dress—

COMMENTATOR: Dead!—

YOUDE: Anne Marie was a princess—

COMMENTATOR: Deserves to be!

Silence.

IK [as before]: Raa! Tee-ah-rah!

Silence.

YOUDE: I have a story. It will help pass thik time, as we have nothing else to do.

ZEE: Alright then.
YOUDE: It were dark, as it is, that is to say, usually is, when these stories are told. Or, that is to say, about when these stories are told. Or, that is to say, these stories tell themselves. And because, that is to say, therefore they are dark.

ZEE: I see.

Silence.

COMMENTATOR: I am Galpa and Komeka, thik start and thik finish, thik first and thik only.

ZEE: I hope—no, it’s a word one. From hope. A touch different. But thik same. Yet, yes, for lack of another, I hope she would stop. She’s said that four times before.

IK [as before]: Tee-eeh-raa! Waa! Waa!

YOUDE: Yes. There were two. Or perhaps three. I don’t remember. It doesn’t matter. I don’t remember. Yes. We’ll say three. On a road, or a bench. They’ve sat. Perhaps. Imagine the scene. These three. Sitting. Never moving. Not an eye. Or a finger. Imagine the scene. Now a bug, the only movement. Yes. Perhaps. The eyes of a bug seeing thik three, each in turn. One. One. Only able to differentiate. No. Not able. Bug. Perhaps a fly. As it dies. It sees one one one millions of times through it’s fly eyes. One one and on and on. [Beat] And thik hand. Never feeling always touching. Holding. Never moving. Not even a scratch. [Beat] Scratch yourself and you find your enemy, scratch further back. Under skin. Into blood now. Maybe bones. If they have any. You find nothingness. I remember a parrot. Yes. A pretty pretty parrot. Ooo, ooo, pretty pretty, let me fly up and up and up and over you. Yes. And this parrot could speak. It were trained. Yes. To speak. Quite amazing really. It’s owner—some man, some woman—trained it to try to say Caminó por la tierra y hizo pis. Simply amazing. Basic level Spanish really, any simpleton could speak it. But this was a parrot. Pretty pretty polly parrot. And all it would say back is Tierra. Tierra tierra tierra over and over again. Would have liked to have drove it’s owner—some man, some woman—batty, it would. Yes. Just only—tierra, tierra, tierra. [Beat] Perhaps it was one of thik three belonged to thik parrot. Or one of thik three was thik parrot. Who knows? [Beat] And—tierra tierra—it were so softly spoken. Thik parrot, soft spoken. [Beat] I don’t open my mouth wide enough when I speak. Pardon. Or perhaps. Yes. Best. Either perhaps my mouth. Or thik ears that listen. No compassion. Only just. Yes. In thik hands. Only yes. Thik only compassion. [Beat] I would have liked to hear that pretty pretty speak for me—Caminó por la tierra y hizo pis—tierra tierra tierra tierra.

Silence.

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Another from Frogner Park
Lithograph by Penny Olmstead
This lithograph depicts a sculpture from Oslo, Norway’s Frogner Park. Norwegian artists Gustav Vigeland (1869-1943) spent most of his life creating statues for the park depicting various stages of human life. Penny—who studied for three months in Caen, France—graduated from Kalamazoo College with a degree in art.
Memoirs from Auvergne

During my stay in Clermont-Ferrand, I took numerous foot journeys with friend and fellow philosopher Pat Gallagher through the volcano-dotted countryside around that beautiful city-with-no-river. Such excursions included hiking through the woods, up and down mountainsides, through medieval villages, across fields, under thornbushes, and occasionally, through a vineyard or two if the opportunity presented itself. It was on these trips that we would take a break on some misty hillside, somehow gouge the cork out of our dollar bottle of fine red wine, and compare the lunches our host mothers had packed for us, which usually consisted of some combination of ever-present bread, ham, stinky but great-tasting cheese, and Nutella. We would sit for hours complaining about the seemingly endless battery of critical questions we would receive from our newfound German friends, continually reminding ourselves of the cliché cultural truism: different doesn't mean wrong.

On one of these trips on a Saturday, I found myself standing in the midst of a pile of rubble on what is called the Plateau of Gergovia. It was on this spot in central France where, nearly two thousand years ago, Vercingetorix, the Chief of the Gauls, was able to momentarily turn back Julius Caesar’s legions.

It wasn’t the historical significance of this flat, grassy area that impressed me so much as the incredible sense of insignificance it bestowed upon me. These little volcanic rocks seemingly dumped in a pile may have once comprised a wall behind which Gallic soldiers regrouped in battle. For that matter, it may have been some Gallic farmer’s house, destroyed by time. I would never know, but I could not help but ponder the silliness of my own petty problems and concerns on such a grand scale, standing in the middle of what was left of some structure that had seen it all.

In this very spot, maybe even before the Bible ever hit the shelves, people killed each other in the pursuit of what they perceived to be the conquest of the world. And the biggest concern on my mind at that point was that my host family had had no interest in switching on President Clinton’s televised inauguration. Yet it’s funny how ignorance of historical perspective perpetuates itself: the Romans were convinced millennia ago that they could conquer the world; fifty years ago Adolf Hitler thought he could do it; throughout the Cold War it seemed to be a race to see who could do it first without vaporizing themselves; and even today, under the guise of the “New World Order” police force, many Americans seem to be convinced that we can still, and even should, do it. No one’s conquered the world yet, and my point is this: while we look back upon historically futile efforts to do so, deluded attempts seem never ending.

I call it ignorance, but perhaps it’s just human nature. Maybe it’s that egocentric need to believe that the here and now is the essential. It’s that need to feel important, to make life worth living, that tells us that what we’re doing is somehow significant in the grand scheme of things; that the American concept of democratic capitalism will really make the world a better place; that my annoyance with obnoxious American tourists will somehow change American cultural perspectives; that the ancient Gallic farmer’s failed crop really could mean the end of the world.

That Gallic farmer is long since gone now. In the relatively near future, I’ll be gone. And I do believe that eventually the United States and France, too, will become a figment of the past.

As I stood there in that open field thinking, my own insignificance struck me, as did the perpetuation of human nature. The damnedest thing is, the farmer probably wondered just as much as I did at how awesome it must have been to see all these volcanoes spew forth into the world.
Travelling

There is a certain sadness

to leaving home
to breaking away
from all that has sheltered you
like boughs of trees
since childhood.

But the knowledge you gain
and all of the mistakes
along the way
pull you out of the darkness
and push you forward.

And even on this train
as I pass through foreign lands
I can see the trees,
the mountains, the grass
and though they appear strange,
stinted, majestic
the leaves are still green...
like the home I left behind
so long ago.

Autumn in Seville
Photograph by Deidra K. Razzaque
Built in the 1800s, this building sits on the
Plaza de España, the seat of government in
Seville, Spain. Deidra captured this fall
scene during a trip in late November.

Anjanette Genovese '94 studied in Madrid, Spain for six months last fall and winter. Anjanette is a Spanish and psychology double major.
Ecuadorians Can't Jump

Life in Ecuador can be slow at times, especially when it comes to meeting new friends. You can't really walk up to a native student at random and say, "Hi, I'm a gringo. Hang out with me." So in order to get some semblance of a social life, as well as some exercise, my friend Steve and I decided to join the university's basketball team.

The team was scheduled to practice for a couple of hours every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and the sign-up sheet said we might even participate in some local tournaments. From the amount of basketball we had watched and played in the Parque Carolina de Quito (the city's enormous central park) we assumed there would be a lot of students showing up. Basketball is rapidly growing in popularity in Ecuador and all of South America.

The first day of practice, we walked onto a court in the park—which, we were told, was the team's meeting place—and started warming up. After a half-hour we were still the only ones there and thought that practice might have been canceled. But before we picked up our stuff, a guy about our age walked onto the other end of the court and started shooting his ball. I walked over to him and asked if he was from the university. He said that he was, and we felt some relief that at least we had come to the right place.

A few minutes later our "coach" showed up. He handed the university Globetrotter-colored ball to Steve and called the practice to order. Unfortunately, he told us, he hadn't really played that much basketball before but had taken the liberty to draw up some plays and drills. Somewhat depressed but trying to keep a positive attitude, we did some calisthenics and muddled through the workout. Several drills later a group of middle-aged men walked over and asked if we'd like to play a pick-up game. We agreed, and the coach joined in since he didn't really know how to coach anyway.

And so went our practices from that day forward; the coach would think up a new hairbrained play for us each time and the same group of guys came to play at around five o'clock. Also, other students from the university began to show up until, two weeks later, we had six—count them—six people on the team.

At the next practice coach told us that he had signed us up to play in a local neighborhood tournament. As it turned out, the "local" neighborhood was twenty-five miles outside the city. We turned off the highway and drove down a dirt road for a few minutes until we saw up ahead an enormous crowd of people surrounding four basketball courts. As we approached even closer, we noticed that only one of the courts actually had rims on the backboards, but that was not stopping several of the teams from warming up on the others. We watched, amazed, as they shot jumpers from more than twenty feet out at no hoop. That's when Steve said to me, "We better be playing on the court with rims."

We pulled up behind the crowd and piled out of the cars. The other teams wore color coordinated uniforms with sponsors listed on the back. We looked at each other and decided that since four of us were wearing white t-shirts and since I had an extra one, they would be our uniforms.

Upon further inspection of the actual playing area, we found the rims to be more than eleven feet high and about a third smaller than a regulation rim.

An annoying man on a loud speaker began to yell to the throng that the tournament would begin in two minutes and that the teams should line up for the national anthem. So we all lined up and the Ecuadorian national anthem crackled on over an old PA system. Then a man handed each team a piece of blue paper with a number on it. He explained that the officials would have the teams play each other by number. Ours said six. Or nine. We couldn't really tell until the first game was announced: team six versus team nine. What a relief.

The crowd of almost two hundred people surrounded the court and began cheering. It seemed that we were playing the hometown favorite. The referees walked out and started the game. They looked somewhat familiar. We then realized that they were both members of one of the other teams. It was beginning to look worse and worse.

We had first possession and dribbled down the court. After ten seconds, a referee blew his whistle and called a foul: offensive. Growling, we trotted down to our end of the court.

They inbounded the ball to their point guard, who dribbled around everyone and scored on a lay-up. The crowd went crazy, yelling the guy's name and chanting the team name.

Still, we felt that we had more talent than they did so we dribbled down again, undaunted, and passed the ball around until Steve was open for the shot. It sailed through the hoop, and the crowd went crazy again. The crowd was cheering for anything that went into the basket. Now that the whole world wasn't against us, our job felt a little bit easier.

At the half, we led by four points, but throughout the second half the score switched back and forth until we were down by one point near the end of the game. The referee told us we had thirty seconds before time expired, so we dribbled down immediately and passed the ball to one of the tallest people on the team who had slipped...
under the basket. He layed the ball in, and one of our opponents fouled him as he went up for the shot. The crowd went crazy once again. The whole play had taken no more than five or six seconds, but for some reason, the referee ran down and yelled that time had expired before the shot, and the game was over.

We couldn't believe it. The crowd couldn't believe it. Even our opponents couldn't believe it.

We argued with him for awhile, but he was set in his decision. The other team had won. The crowd soon lost its support for us because we were holding up the next scheduled game. So we got back in the cars with our sweat-drenched white uniforms and drove back to Quito—zero and one in tournament play.

We never played in another tournament after that day, but continued our practices. There was always a good pick-up game in the park.

Economics major Brian Enneking '94 studied for six months in Quito, Ecuador. While there, he completed an ethnography at Cámara de Industriales, or Chamber of Industries, researching the effect of North American Free Trade Agreement on the Ecuadorian economy.
Our First Adventure in España

Our second weekend in Spain we headed for Sevilla. The World Expo was in progress and we anxiously anticipated our first foreign study adventure. Despite the fact we were still experiencing culture shock and trying to grasp the Spanish language, we could not afford to let this cultural opportunity pass us by.

On Friday, sixteen students from the program unloaded from a seven-hour bus trip from Madrid with high hopes of finding a hostel or pension to spend the night. After being turned away by what seemed to be every hostel in town, we decided to “rough it” and headed for the train station. We weren’t the only travelers with this brilliant idea. The train station had turned into a Holiday Inn. People were creative in using available space for sleeping—on benches, under benches, in between benches, and on bathroom floors. However, when we tried to catch some sleep the floor cleaning crew insisted that we find new beds.

After a few hours of catnaps we ventured out to find something to satisfy the rumbling in our stomachs. We treated ourselves to a typical Spanish breakfast of churros. We quickly found out that churros were very similar to donuts that have sat in grease for three days! These are often served with a thick and bitter chocolate sauce. To wash it down we indulged in industrial strength Spanish-style coffee.

Next on our agenda, the reason we had traveled to Sevilla—the World Fair! The lines were characteristically Spanish, in other words, chaotic. Everyone pushed and shoved only to enter and experience security’s search. Even though we had only slept twenty minutes and were feeling a grease and caffeine rush, our hopes were still high. We were excited! What could go wrong now?

Everything was going our way until we emerged from Japan’s exhibit to find it raining! This was ironic because it rains so seldomly in Spain. Everyone had told us how beautiful, dry, and hot it would be in Sevilla. Following our impromptu shower at the Expo, we went to buy sweatshirts. We were freezing as well as soaked! After finding a semidry spot to park, we sat down to munch on our magdeliñas.

In town, we found a Chinese restaurant where we could sit, eat a warm meal, and dry off. The food was good, but the drinks were better. We warmed up quickly and even tried to cure Wendy’s cold by making her drink a home remedy—Irish coffee. Little did we know that the restaurant staff was admiring Ana’s Gap hat. Because they admired her hat so much they gave us a round of drinks on the house!

Upon leaving the restaurant we felt warmer and our spirits were lifted. The sun came out and we returned to the Expo with renewed hope. Nonetheless, after awhile the lines were again too long and our energy too low. We left Expo in search of a place to stay.

While walking around, a woman who must have seen the desperation in our faces approached us. It took us awhile to clearly understand what she was saying because of our mediocre language skills, but we finally realized that she was offering us her house to sleep in for the night. No one knew exactly how to respond since this was a custom that we were completely unfamiliar with. We couldn’t believe that a total stranger was offering her home to us. We were shocked at ourselves for graciously accepting her offer. Once the deal was closed we agreed to meet her later and walk to her home. She, like many Spaniards, possessed an attitude of openness, trust, and hospitality that was moving. As Americans, it was difficult to trust a stranger, but we realized that we were experiencing a Spanish phenomenon.

That night we slept a few hours and awoke early to catch a bus. However, the time had changed and it was actually one hour earlier than we thought. We waited for the bus for two hours! Upon reaching our destination we decided to kill the few remaining hours we had left in Sevilla by drying out in a park. We gratefully boarded the bus that afternoon and headed back to Madrid.

Human development & social relations major Deborah Blumenthal ’94 studied in Madrid, Spain for six months. Jessica McNeece ’94 is also a human development & social relations major who studied in Madrid last fall and winter.
E Major

ringing
a stroke on the bell
I’m inside
and the jar
breaks

the Red Wolf
calls the moon
strikes
a major chord
on my harp

a vocation
evocation
by five volumes of diary
six of letters
woman of

child of the 19th
claimant by the 20th
one brand
another leash

weaver
looked down to the world
and up through the water
but sea
the threads of
sapph-fire
in your tapestry

you and I become
the Goddess
who holds my oaths
to seek your truth
in mine
and to speak it
to lift your veil
on the wind from
Phoenix’s wings

my favor
I drop into
the gate
through witch you
passed
do I wear yours
into battle?

The Ouse River
Photograph by Emily Galloway
According to historical accounts, on her last day author Virginia Woolf walked through her garden, put rocks in her pockets, and committed suicide by drowning herself in the Ouse River in southern England.

Emily Galloway ‘94, an English major with a concentration in women’s studies, spent six months at the University of Sussex in Great Britain studying in the university’s women’s studies program. While in Sussex, Emily read nearly everything written by Virginia Woolf. “E Major” is one of several poems inspired by Woolf’s work that Emily wrote while on foreign study.
Excerpts from India

July 8, 1992

We have been in India for two weeks now and are at the Pandapoor Festival for the weekend. It has been interesting and fun despite the thousands of people milling around and dancing in the street until the wee hours of the morning. The devotees have all (or most) marched to this site from all over the state of Maharashtra (which is huge) and have been very jovial and interested in the funny looking white people wandering in their streets. So far my main obstacle here has been getting used to being stared at and feeling like I am treading on peoples’ culture and space....

Surprisingly I don’t miss home much. I have a slight amount of loneliness in terms of missing family and friends, but mostly I have a nagging sense of “I wish I had [insert random American comfort like ice, Coke, or toilet paper]....” For the most part I am pushing these thoughts away and trying to adapt and not be such a wimp....

August 13, 1992

Things with my host family have been rough. We have very little in common and to talk about, and I feel like an intruder in their home. Thus I am moving to a new house on Monday. I feel sad and regret that I couldn’t make things work, but I guess there is no going back now. I hope that they won’t be too mad or insulted when I get back on Sunday. I am kind of scared. I don’t like confrontations and having to explain my reasoning....maybe I am being unreasonable and irrational....

I am on vacation for the weekend at the Allora-Ajanta Caves. It is hard to believe these caves were dug out and inhabited by Buddhist monks more than a thousand years ago. The wall paintings are amazingly intricate and have for the most part been preserved or restored. I hope to see some more stuff on my three-week vacation, which is in about a month. Steve and I are supposed to travel together, but I hope he chill out a little before we go. He says he is nervous about “appearances” with just the two of us traveling alone. Sounds sort of dumb and irrational to me.... Shrug.

September 15, 1992

I am in Panaji, Goa on vacation, and I’d be having a really good time if I had any company. Steve dropped his bombshell and announced on the train as it pulled into Panaji station that he is ditching me to go to Bombay and study. I thought it was unbelievably uncool. I was incredibly offended, more so now as I write this than I was then. It is a scary thought that I have to travel for the next three weeks by myself but exciting too. I am in a foreign country, in a place where I know no one, by myself. I think I will head down the coast to Colva Beach and hang out there. That is where all the European tourists hang out. At least I can get a tan and maybe meet some people. Then I can get a bearing on what I am going to do for the next three weeks.

September 18, 1992

I am back where I started, in Pune. I went to Colva Beach and it started out great. The town is beautiful with palm trees, bright blue water, and clean sand. And although the foreigners around the area were rather snotty and pretentious they all seemed to be having a good time. Of course being me, things never seem to go right. To be brief (since this is my journal and I don’t have to rehash anything I don’t want to), I was walking back from a beach restaurant at dusk after having watched the sun set with two very nice British students and was accosted by a man whose intentions were not to meet me and have a intellectual conversation. He scared me more than hurt me physically. I was outraged at the presumption that he could, or intended to, hurt me, and I basically beat him upside the head with my beach bag full of shoes, camera, and other American beach essentials. Once I returned to the hotel, I collapsed into hysteria to the mystification of the hotel staff. I called “home” to Pune and my host mother sent her sister, who lives in Panaji, to get me the next morning. Now I am very tired but recouping and getting a grip. In a few days I am setting out again.

October 9, 1992

Vacation is over and I am back in Pune. Vacation ended well. I met Jennifer in Trivindrum and from there we headed for another beach near Covalum. The beach was great and I saw some guys from Israel whom I met at Colva Beach. They had found me in hysterics trying to explain to my host family over the phone what had happened to me and were really nice and kept me company that evening (actually they took me to a dance hall on the beach and taught me strange card games over beer...it was kind of surreal to be honest). Anyway, I saw them there and it was strange to find them again. Then Jen and I went to Bangalore and spent a day shopping, shopping, shopping. Then stupid me, with no money to actually pay for a ticket, hopped her train back to Pune. I’m not sure what we were thinking, but I almost got booted into second-class unreserved seating, which would have been a bad scene. However, much to my humiliation and embarrassment, we accepted money from a man in our berth who was kind enough to pay the difference of
the ticket I needed. I have since repaid the loan, but I felt really silly for my stupidity. I guess I am glad he was there though....

October 18, 1993

I am in the American Colleges of the Midwest office once again, listening to my walkman and writing. I finished my homework and have nothing better to do at the moment. All the shops are closed right now because it is the middle of the afternoon. It's too hot outside to wander anyway. Usha (my host mother) bought me a new salwar kameez (a long shirt and pant suit) last night for Diwali (an Indian holiday). It was really sweet of her to think of me. We saw two eunuchs in drag in the shop too, which was "interesting." I'd have to say they were pretty ugly men in drag. I was sort of amused by Usha's "I really feel sorry for them, but if I don't look at them, they aren't there" attitude, but it perked my curiosity. I asked her about it later, but she was unable or unwilling to explain who and what they were. All that I got out of her was they were social outcasts and they bless pregnant women and collect alms. I wanted to talk to them but she told me not to because it was "wrong" and they wouldn't want to talk to me anyway....

We got home and discovered that my host father and host brother had StarTV (cable) installed while we were gone. Usha was extremely upset, because she insisted that it was garbage and too expensive, but she didn't say anything except that if the kids grades fall she will rip out the cable. What else could she say? I am really going to miss her and the rest of the family. I have grown to respect her and the inner strength she has. We certainly don't agree on many subjects, but we have always listened to one another and tried to see things from a different perspective and understand each other. To be honest and sentimental, they have been more like family to me in the past four months than my "real" family has been for years....

Sonja A. Dean '94, an international area studies major with special interest in South Asia, studied last summer and fall in Pune, India. Sonja is thinking of returning for her Senior Individualized Project and applying for a Watson Fellowship to further her studies there after graduation.
In Toledo

We turned left out of 
*El Hotel Pintor El Greco*
and began our inquisitive climb
up ancient cobblestone streets
that seemed to invite us
to uncover their secrets.
Stones wet with new rain
made the simple act of walking
a difficult task
luckily
I had you to hold on to.

The *callecitas* were black
their darkness only interrupted
by street lamps
scattered
here
and
there.

The *callecitas* were empty
the last tour bus
left hours ago,
leaving us
that November night
like two lost souls
amidst the
upward
and
downward
maze of stone
the color of
Toledo steel.

We turned down an alley
and another
and another
and another
led, not by a map,
but by our curiosity.

Lost in the energy
of Toledo’s past,
we found
our love
as we walked
these
narrow
Toledo
streets
whose buildings
sandwiched
us
with history.

Lost in these streets
we would learn of art
see churches
and the cathedral
we would learn the history
of these cobblestone streets
and at the same time
we would become a part of their history.

*An Italian Sidestreet*
*Photograph by Karilee Reinking*

This narrow street is nestled in the
Trastevere district in Rome. Karilee
Reinking ’94 is a psychology major with a
concentration in classics. She studied for
six months in Rome, Italy.

Jessica Parker ’94, a Spanish major with a concentration in international area studies, spent her foreign study in Madrid, Spain for six months.
Getting Away from It All

May 1, 1993

We arrived in Puerto Escondido at about five in the morning today. Puerto Escondido is a coastal city in the state of Oaxaca, seven hours by bus from the city of Oaxaca. When we arrived the sun was just starting to rise, but it was still very hot and humid. Beads of perspiration had already started to form under my shirt and I hadn’t even done anything yet. The air was thick and the odor of fish and sea water was prevalent. Carrying our daypacks (this was only a weekend trip so we didn’t pack much clothing), we headed away from the bus station (it was more of a bus stop) toward the water. We didn’t know where we were going but the word beach was firmly entrenched in all of our minds, so we figured the best direction was toward the ocean. Part of the group planned to camp out and the rest wanted a hotel. It was obvious that the water was still quite a distance away so we decided to split up. Bob, Dana, and I had our hammocks and rope and wanted to find a campsite. The others went off to their hotel.

Everyone in the town seemed to be asleep except for an occasional pedestrian on the main thoroughfare. However, the taxi drivers were in full swing so finding a taxi was no problem. After we finally put together enough Spanish, the taxi driver was able to take us to a trailer park on a cliff above the water. It was totally empty except for a fat, shirtless Mexican running the place. There was no place to stretch out our hammocks, only acres of dirt, barbecue grills, and an occasional tree around us. It sure wasn’t what we had expected. Before we could decide what to do, our friendly taxi driver was already on his way back to town so we were stuck there. Luckily we found a path down to the beach from the trailer park. The spot we found couldn’t have been more perfect. It was a small beach in an inlet, away from the main part of town. The powerful waves that had made Puerto Escondido famous were nowhere to be seen; only calm blue ocean was in front of us. There were open-air huts—that is, huts with no walls, only a roof and supports—perfect for hammocks. The beach was almost deserted. It was still early but it remained that way throughout the day. We put up the hammocks, took off the shoes, and fell asleep for awhile.

We didn’t do anything today. Relaxing in the hammocks, swimming, and sitting in the sun were the main activities. A Mexican was selling fresh seafood, beer, and soda on the beach. We had a few beers this afternoon along with the food that we brought. As night fell, the people who had been on the beach left and soon we were there all by ourselves. Bob, Dana, and I sat out under the stars with our Dos Equis and Corona and talked for a long time. It was great spending time with new friends in this beautiful setting.

In the Sun
Photograph by Erin Lee
A group of turtles bathe in the sunlight on the beaches of the Galapagos Islands in late December. Biology major Erin Lee ‘94 studied for six months in Ecuador. She will return in September to do her Senior Individualized Project there.

Human development & social relations major Kenny Metcalfe ’95 spent a three-month foreign study during the spring in Oaxaca, Mexico. He plans to return next spring to visit and hopes to complete his career development quarter in Ecuador.
Towards the Dog Wagging Its Tail

S
omeone once told me that the Foreign Study Program at this College is the tail that wags the dog. Indeed, nearly every new student I have asked is quick to mention foreign study as one of their main reasons for choosing Kalamazoo. Why should these students attach such value to this program? Because it provides them with a three-month credit-bearing vacation during the junior year? Probably not—that’s a really expensive trip! Instead probably because of the deep engagement in another culture that such an experience can offer.

I expect that at some level my students recognize that working together with their peers from another culture—sharing the joys and frustrations in a common learning experience—holds the possibility for building bridges, opening doors, and shaping attitudes that will serve them for the rest of their lives. That was surely the effect my own foreign study experiences have had on me.

When I was sixteen years old, I was dropped into the midst of a family in the Netherlands. I arrived not speaking a word of Dutch, but I attended school in the same class as my Dutch host brother of the same age. I slowly learned enough of the language to follow lessons, to do homework, and to write examinations. By the end of the year, I actually managed to get a few good grades!

After I graduated from college, I spent a year studying at the University of Tubingen in Germany. This time I arrived with rudimentary experience in the language, supplemented by a six-week review course at a Goethe Institute before the semester began. I faithfully attended Wielandt’s lectures on composite groups with deep appreciation and steadily growing comprehension; I attended Tamaschke’s lectures on homological algebra with less appreciation and no comprehension; and I enrolled in a proseminar on group theory for third-year students.

Although none of us in this seminar knew much group theory, each of us was given a paper to study. Together with our tutors, we worked on our papers during the course of the term to master the contents and prepare a talk that summarized our understanding. My lecture was set for a day towards the end of the term. With about six weeks remaining, I was so frightened and discouraged that I asked to be removed from the schedule. Each of the talks had lasted about two hours. They were impeccably prepared, delivered without notes, and seemed to be far beyond anything I thought remotely possible for myself. My tutor urged me not to give up. I began working with other students, asking for help, offering my own point of view, and sitting in on practice sessions as my peers rehearsed their presentations. A few days before I was scheduled to speak, they gave me a chance to rehearse in front of them. The helpful advice that they gave me then, and the moral support they provided during the actual seminar talk, sealed my relationship with these students and remains one of the highlights of my years as a student.

Working with other students towards a common goal was probably the single most important experience in my own foreign study. Through this work I gained the confidence to participate in the rich student life of a European university. That experience made possible my own year-long soak in German culture.

The effects of these experiences have never left me. Scarceley a day passes that my thinking is not in some way shaped by my firsthand experience with other approaches to addressing social needs. When I read the local newspaper, I am aware that there are many ways to deal with transportation, education, architecture, urban planning, and health care other than those that have evolved in this country. Moreover, the school and university friendships that grew up and deepened around our common pursuits so many years ago now extend into the next generation, as our children get to know each other. And finally, fluency in German and Dutch has given me ample evidence of the power of language to shape experience. Having used another language in another culture, I can see more easily how arbitrary many of our most basic cultural assumptions really are. This brings a richness to my life that I cannot imagine having received in any other way.

T
herefore, when I came to Kalamazoo College in the mid-seventies, I was excited about the possibilities that the Foreign Study Program offered for my students. They too would be able to discover how much of their own lives were due to the peculiarities of the language and culture in which they happened to have been raised. This seemed like an important first step in the kind of gracious living this College claimed as the end of learning.

But I was surprised to learn that among those students who had studied in Europe, many did not treat the opportunity in this way. Most of the primary relationships these students had on foreign study were not with their peers in the host universities but with other Kalamazoo students. Some of the courses they took were either especially designed for Kalamazoo students or designed by the host institution for its foreign visitors. And only on rare occasions did students actually take a course in their major—the field in which they were presumably most competent and which would therefore give them a good entree into the intensity of university life—which had been such an important part of my own foreign study experience. Moreover, it appeared that for many
the real business of having a deep soak in a foreign culture was constantly being interrupted by weekend trips to meet other Kalamazoo students from other centers.

On the Foreign Study Committee this year we have been exploring ways in which to encourage our students, especially those studying in Europe, to engage in an authentic university experience. We clearly have a long way to go, but some of the first steps look promising. We have begun to teach all of the courses that we offer during the spring in the local languages. The new non-Kalamazoo program that we will be affiliated with in Aix-en-Provence, France is located closer to, and has stronger formal ties with, the university there. And for students who wish to continue studying in their major while abroad, the committee is ready to assist departments here with developing connections with their counterparts at the host institution abroad. For example, the mathematics department has already done this with the universities in Strasbourg, France and Erlangen, Germany.

Through site visits, on-site colloquium talks, and other professional interactions, these inter-departmental connections are a natural beginning for Kalamazoo’s faculty to become involved in the Foreign Study Program as well. During the last thirty years, the students who pass through Kalamazoo have developed a lore about “what foreign study is really all about” that has had little or no faculty input. But if our students are to become involved in the university life abroad, then our faculty will need to be involved in the Foreign Study Program at home. I see this as one of the chief goals of the Foreign Study Committee over the next several years. Achieving it is essential, if this dog is finally to begin wagging its own tail.

On the March
Photograph by Erich Hammer
The band leads the Queen’s Guard through the streets of Copenhagen, Denmark daily during the autumn and winter at noon. Physics major Erich Hammer ’94 studied in Münster, Germany for six months.
Monsieur André Heintz joined the French Resistance at the age of twenty, soon after the Nazis invaded his country.

"Resistance was just a sort of instinctive reaction against the lack of freedom, an internal revolt of the conscience," explained the retired English professor and current director of Kalamazoo College's foreign study center in Caen, France.

The fears of that time, when one out of three of his fellow members were captured, and most of those captured were killed, are still with M. Heintz, now seventy-three.

"I still have nightmares from time to time," he said. "I dream that I’ve been caught by the Gestapo and they are just beginning to torture me, and fortunately, usually, I awake. But I awake in anguish, almost choking, wondering if I’d be able to hold on or if I’d have given away names."

Torture, for M. Heintz and the other Resistance members, was more frightening than death.

"We didn’t mind being shot. That was part of the game," he said. "But of course you were never shot on the spot; you were first tortured. You never knew how much you would be able to stand."

M. Heintz joined the Resistance not only to fight Nazi oppression, but also because of friendship.

"Before the war, I went to school in England for a little while, in Bristol. I was thinking of my friends in Bristol who were being bombed." What made it worse, M. Heintz said, was that by the end of the summer of 1940, the Germans were announcing to the citizens of his city, Caen, that German bombers based there were bombing several English cities, including Bristol. He discovered after the war that a friend of his had died in those bombings.

Soon after the Germans arrived in Caen, "people tried to get together" and begin Resistance activities, M. Heintz said. He talked with a friend from his Rover Scout group whom he trusted. His friend knew of other people interested in resisting, including some scouts, and they began.

"The Rover Crew which I was in became part of the Resistance," M. Heintz said.

Resistance work, M. Heintz said, was "not all thrilling, not at all what you see in the films." The Allies discouraged sabotage early on in the war, preferring that the Resistance concentrate on collecting information.

M. Heintz’s Resistance group gathered weekly information on German stations in and near Caen. Sometimes, the information was relayed to Britain by boats and planes that came across the English Channel and landed clandestinely. His area of Normandy had too many Germans stationed in it, M. Heintz said, so his group’s information would often be sent to meeting points near Rouen, a hundred miles away. Other times, the information was relayed to a radio operator, who transmitted coded messages to Britain.

To obtain his group’s assignments, M. Heintz met his leader every week at an early morning service at St. Sauveur, a church in downtown Caen. They entered from two different streets so they were never seen together. Sitting in the same pew, they exchanged prayer books. Inside the one M. Heintz received, he found questions for his group to answer in the coming week, and in the book he handed his leader were the answers to the previous week’s questions.

"Unfortunately, he was arrested in April 1944," M. Heintz said of his leader, "because he himself was dependent on a leader who was arrested. And he was still in prison the morning of the D-Day landings, and all those who were in the prison on D-Day were shot by the Germans—eighty-seven [people].

"He must have been truly courageous, because he must have been interrogated by the Germans more than once, but he never gave them my name."

M. Heintz’s group was asked to discover and describe German posts in Caen.

"After we had spotted a German headquarters of a blockhaus, in the next questionnaire it would ask what sort of guns do they have, how many men are on duty there, what the passwords are—which was a silly question because the passwords were changed every day. And towards the end, which made us think D-Day would soon be there, the last question was, how many men would be necessary to get hold of the place."

Two to three thousand people, or one percent of the population, in Calvados, M. Heintz’s département, were active Resistance members. But, said M. Heintz, "we knew that we could have had the help of almost everyone." One way non-Resistance members helped the cause was with the information gathering, M. Heintz said. He and his Resistance friends went to the bus station, where people would talk about what they knew or had heard the Germans were doing.

"When you would hear that the Germans had occupied a village," M. Heintz said, "you lined up where the people going to that village were, and you just listened."

To get information about a new German headquarters which was being dug into a hill on the outskirts of Caen, M. Heintz’s group went to the café where the workers who were forced to dig the headquarters went after work. After talking to them, the group was eventually able to draw a fairly accurate map of the complex without actually having been there.
M. Heintz himself provided his group with a link to the outside world. He listened to the BBC on a crystal radio set which he kept hidden in a can meant for beans. The radio, still in the can, is now on display in the museum section of the World War II Memorial in Caen.

Not only was the British news different from the German news, but three times a day, the BBC would broadcast "personal messages" in French to the Resistance, such as "Napoleon wants to kiss Josephine" or "Apples are still green in Normandy."

"Usually you listened to those sentences without understanding any, but once in awhile there was one that applied to your group," M. Heintz said. For instance, the message about apples in Normandy was the password for a party from M. Heintz's group to be in a field for an air drop. Such air drops would contain ammunition, guns, and explosives, as well as chocolate and cigarettes stuffed into the empty spaces.

Sometimes a personal message would serve as a confirmation that the British had received certain information. One such message almost got the group's radio operator in trouble. The group had sent information to the British and signed the message with the name of the poet Alain Chartier, which a member of M. Heintz's group had taken as an assumed name. So the BBC read the message, "Alain Chartier, poet from lower Normandy, was born in Bayeux," to confirm that they had received the message.

"It was a mistake to have included Bayeux, because the Germans—who were furious because they never understood any reference [in] those messages, which were rearranged sentences—for once understood Bayeux, and they thought, 'Well, something must be going on in Bayeux.'"

Two days later a member of the group saw a German truck being driven through Caen that he knew contained a triangulator, a device used to locate radio transmitters. He recognized one of the six registration numbers that the group had been given to memorize because the trucks with those numbers had triangulators in them. The group's leader was informed and the radio operator was told to stop transmitting before he could be found.

M. Heintz said that after the war they learned that the information that had put their radio operator in danger had been put to good use. For example, he heard about a British commodore who had been in charge of a ship during the D-Day invasion.

"He was amazed how much information he knew about his target, and he had always wondered how it could have been relayed to him. He even said he had great admiration for the people in the Resistance because they had done such a good job," said M. Heintz. The commodore's target information had been transmitted in the Alain Chartier message.

M. Heintz's group worked in relative isolation. No one was supposed to know more than five other Resistance members, so that if someone was caught and divulged names, only a few more people could be captured.

The isolation of the different groups had another advantage.

"Towards the end of the war, we suddenly realized there were four or five other groups doing the same thing we were," M. Heintz said. "We thought it was a crime to risk four or five people on doing the same thing. But the Allies only took consideration of information if two or three people reported the same thing."

A second job that M. Heintz's group performed, he said, was "helping people in trouble." They furnished fake ID cards to people who needed to hide from the Nazis.

"That was a big job," M. Heintz commented, "and that's how many were caught, because if they found that someone had a false identity they asked who had given it and in some cases they were caught."

M. Heintz helped furnish new identities to "scores of young men in trouble, some that were being hunted by the Gestapo for Resistance reasons, many others who were to be sent to Germany for slave labor."

About five British and American pilots shot down over France also received help from M. Heintz. They were among the few grounded pilots not captured by the Nazis. Farmers hid them and removed them from the
immediate area of the crash. To contact the Resistance, M. Heintz said, the farmers would often go to confession and ask their priest, who generally knew which of his colleagues was in the Resistance.

Eventually the pilots were brought into Caen and kept in hiding until they could be given a fake ID, identifying them as deaf and dumb, since they did not speak French. Then the Resistance found them relatively safe escape routes to get them to Spain, the French Alps, or Switzerland. Sometimes the pilots would be caught, because they talked or because their false ID was discovered. "Being deaf and dumb isn't easy," commented M. Heintz.

M. Heintz knew that D-Day was coming as early as April, but he did not know it was coming to his backyard.

"Our leader gave me five sentences to learn by heart," he said. The phrases were other personal messages to listen for on the BBC.

Around June 1, 1944, M. Heintz heard the message announcing that D-Day should take place within a week: "The hour of combat will come."

The night of June 5, the sky took on a red glow. M. Heintz received an order to stay at home and watch the German division headquarters, near his house.

"What surprised me was that nothing happened before 3:30 a.m., when the first dispatch rider arrived, rather perturbed," he said. "But that still surprises me because by then, ten thousand men were in France."

Soldiers landed in France, beginning at 11:20 p.m., with the help of parachutes and gliders. That night, thirty thousand parachutists and pilots were in the air over Normandy. At four o'clock the next afternoon the first Allied bombs fell on Caen.

"We rushed to save all the people we could," M. Heintz said.

An insane asylum in a convent in downtown Caen was set up as a makeshift hospital. M. Heintz began to take people wounded in the bombing there. M. Heintz's sister worked there as a nurse, and when he brought the last of the wounded, she told him that the latest round of bombs had hit a ward of the hospital and killed some people.

There was no sign showing the bombers that the building was a hospital, so M. Heintz and his sister decided to lay a red cross outside the building.

"I thought of getting a hold of the red carpets in the Chapel, but the place was locked. We couldn't find any paint because the Germans had requisitioned everything. Finally my sister thought of using the sheets which were already soiled with blood in the operating rooms."

M. Heintz, his sister, and an intern took the sheets outside.

"As we were laying down the fourth side of the cross, a plane appeared. And we thought we were going to be strafed. We looked at one another, thought, 'Well, we must finish the job, not run away.'

"But the plane was an observer. It tipped its wing to show that he had seen us. In fact, he probably reported it, because they avoided the place after that."

By the third day of the bombing, all of Caen's fire fighters were killed; many died when a bomb exploded near their barracks. The few survivors all died the next day while fighting the fires. M. Heintz and his Scout group became part of an improvised fire squad, but they weren't very successful.

"The fire spread and spread," M. Heintz recalled. "It burned for eleven days. After it stopped in one part, it started in another part. We had to destroy some houses so that the fire wouldn't spread any more. We used the only motor pump we had, which wasn't enough to stop the fire."

The bombing of Caen lasted seventy-seven days.

"There was shelling every day," M. Heintz recalled. "At tea time, we felt quite safe. After five, it was twice as dangerous."

Most of Caen was liberated on July 9, and the southern half of it, south of the Orne River, on July 19. But bombing continued until August 18, M. Heintz said; the front was only a mile away from Caen for a while.

While battling a fire in a theatre, M. Heintz stopped to pull down a sign the Germans had posted.

"No demonstration will be tolerated during the show," the sign said, in French. "Any spectator that by word or gesture will show his opinion will be immediately arrested."

According to M. Heintz, this applied mostly to the newsreels, which were German propaganda.

"When Hitler appeared, people would hiss," he explained.

M. Heintz still has the sign. He took it, he said, because he thought that "after the war, people won't believe it."

M. Heintz is a soft-spoken man. But he still holds passionately the same beliefs that led him to resist Nazi occupation at the age of twenty.

"What Hitler tried to do was to annihilate all individual conscience," he stated. "I hope that this encourages people to resist propaganda, oppression, and all dishonesty. It's worth fighting against anything which does not agree with freedom of thought."
The Most Foreign Part of Foreign Study

It is funny now when I think about what foreign study was like. Just a year ago I had not the slightest idea of what a jallaba was or what it was like to sleep overnight on a train. A trip to Morocco and many weeks of traveling in Europe later, I now know that a jallaba is a garment similar to the cloak of Obi-Wan Kanobe and, in fact, own one thanks to some extremely persistent merchants in Tangier; however, I still have yet to experience sleep, as most people know it, on a rolling train. My experiences abroad, like those of most others, were both good and bad, yet I think I will remember the good experiences much more vividly than the bad in the years that follow foreign study.

I find the term foreign study the most intriguing part of the whole experience. After all, what is so “foreign” about it? It is true that the various languages and cultures of countries are, in fact, “foreign” in that they are somewhat unfamiliar to students who go there. However, the people of these lands still have the same basic necessities as people here. They think, speak, and act differently, but still must eat and sleep as we must. It is this idea—I do not remember which country I was in when it occurred to me—that led me to realize that the most “foreign” part of foreign study is not the country in which one is studying, but rather the person himself or herself.

In my case, appropriately, the largest foreign element of foreign study was myself, and I must tell you that I had a great time getting to know myself. In fact after awhile, I came to realize that I am quite a guy! Still, realizing that I was the most “foreign” part of foreign study remains my most memorable experience from my studies abroad.

On the Napo
Photograph by Brian Enneking
A tour guide leads a dugout canoe down the Napo River, which eventually empties into the Amazon River in South America.
The Metcalfes and the McCanns

Tuesday—March 2, 1993:

Armed with the information I had received from my cousin Alice and some information on my great-grandmother Joan Watson (Metcalfe), my cousin Edith and I got an early start and headed for Armagh. We drove through Belfast to get to the motorway where I saw many soldiers with automatic weapons and bulletproof vests. It was shocking at first to see armed soldiers pointing automatic weapons out of personnel carriers at oncoming traffic. But it is necessary, I guess. Northern Ireland is British but not altogether too willingly, so the English have to protect against terrorism by the IRA, an organization with many factions. For the people of Belfast these soldiers are a fact of life, and people carry on their business like they are not even there.

Within fifteen minutes, we were in the countryside of County Down. The hills were green and sheep grazed as before. Edith and I didn’t talk much. I felt as if she wasn’t very interested in this family ancestry business. We arrived in Armagh, about forty miles southeast of Belfast. It is a small town of several thousand, but the largest in Northern Ireland after Belfast and Londonderry. Armagh is famous for serving as the religious seat of both the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church of Ireland. The cathedrals for each religion, both named St. Patrick’s Cathedral, sit on separate hills overlooking the town. We walked to the Church of Ireland Cathedral where a distant cousin of ours, James McCann, was Archbishop of Armagh and the Primate of Ireland. The ancient cathedral stood on the ruins of the original church built by St. Patrick in the fifth century. Edith and I met a caretaker inside the cathedral who knew James McCann and told us about him. James McCann had been archbishop and primate during the 1960s and died about fifteen years ago. He is the nephew of my great-great grandfather McCann.

We went to the library of the church where we hoped to speak to the dean of the cathedral, but he wasn’t in so we headed for lunch. Over lunch I could see Edith was becoming more interested in the research of the family history. We discussed all the members of the tree with great interest. I was glad Edith was enjoying the family search. We returned to the library and found the dean was there. He talked about James McCann at length, giving us useful information and showing us a picture of him. The dean knew James personally when he served as a young deacon under the archbishop. He said that James was very well liked and a good man to work with. As archbishop, James was quite involved with his congregation but was troubled by the increased tension and unrest in Northern Ireland. Surprisingly, after he retired from his position, he became very reclusive. At the time of his death, a note written by him was found that requested no representatives of the Church of England or Ireland be present at his funeral. This of course caused quite a stir, but the reason for it was a mystery even to the dean. Supposedly, according to the dean, there are sisters of James that are still alive. We were excited to finally get information about some of our relatives.

We then went to the old Palace where the Primates of the Church of Ireland lived from the eighteenth century until 1974. Although it is closed to the public, we managed to get a tour of the wonderful building. Today it is used as council offices for the city of Armagh, but some rooms are still intact. We saw the state room with paintings of British royalty. It was very elegant. Next to the Palace is the Primate’s Chapel, which is small but beautiful with wonderful woodwork and stained glass. By this time it was almost four o’clock in the afternoon so we headed back to Belfast and talked continuously about family history—”what ifs” and other questions.

On the way back we stopped at the old neighborhood where Edith used to live before her parents’ deaths. She showed me 36 Paxton Street in East Belfast where my great-great uncle Edward lived until his death a few years ago. Edith says every time Edward’s sister Evelyn came to visit Ireland she would go to visit that house, even after Uncle Eddie’s death. It must have special meaning. We returned to Edith’s house and spent hours examining documents that Edith had kept after Uncle Eddie’s death. They revealed many things, but fostered more questions about the family. Edith has a telephone directory of Belfast that says Alice Anne Metcalfe lived in 36 Paxton Street in 1937. She was alive much later than we had been told by our relatives. Both Edith and I were now consumed with pursuing our family history. We resolved to continue the research....

Celtic Border Design

Pen & Ink by Elizabeth Arledge Ross

The design on page 43 is a variation of a traditional Celtic knot pattern from the early Celtic Christian period. It is patterned after work from the ancient Book of Kells and Book of Durrow. Elizabeth Arledge Ross ’94, a political science and history major, studied for nine months in Aberdeen, Scotland.

Peter Watson ’94 visited Ireland after completing six months of foreign study last fall and winter in Strasbourg, France. Peter, a biology major, hopes to attend medical school after graduation.
A Pilgrimage to Ireland

Since I was young, I have always wanted to go to Ireland to meet one facet of my extended family. Nobody would ever guess from my appearance that half of my family heritage is Irish, but my grandfather on my mother’s side was raised in Ireland, and he married a full Irish-American while living in the United States. However, my father’s heritage, which dominates my appearance, is quite different—he was born in India. Since my father is closer to his roots than my mother, I have always considered myself more Indian than Irish. So I wanted to discover my Irish roots. During foreign study, after many years of waiting, I was finally able to make my pilgrimage to Ireland. In Ireland, I found the other part of my heritage and even learned part of what it means to be Irish.

Ireland has a special charm and flare that is difficult to describe. No matter where I was, people smiled and waved at me. Relatives who did not even know of my existence welcomed me into their homes with open arms. Through my family I was able to discover and experience Ireland.

In a small town near Waterford, I met up with a cousin who took me to the local pub, “Rockett’s,” which happened to belong to his family. There I watched the Irish people laugh and smile as time slipped away. Everyone was relaxed. Each person who came into the pub knew I was a stranger, but they took me into their “family” while I was there. “Rockett’s” had a personality created by the local regulars who came everyday wearing either their smiles and laughter or their troubles of another hard day. The smiles stayed as the troubles seemed to melt away. Somehow, they believed that their problems would take care of themselves as they sat nursing their Guinesses at the local pub.

I left my family in Waterford to explore the endless countryside hills with my mother. We met many wonderful people. When I asked for directions from the rare passerby (which was quite frequent because I was inevitably lost), someone always helped me. I was sure that a couple of people were going to climb into the car with my mother and me until they were sure that we were on the right winding road.

While we drove, I stared out the window and marveled at the splendor of the countryside. The highways consisted of roads barely big enough for two cars. Since we were traveling during the off season, we had the small roads to ourselves. The roads wound through the rolling hills as we passed farms and pubs. Each time we came to the top of a hill we saw a sea of green hills speckled with farms. Ireland truly is the “Emerald Island.”

An amazing thing happened to me when I was in Ireland. The worry-free and relaxed pace was contagious; I found myself relaxing in the back of a pub enjoying a pint as the world passed slowly by. In the hectic life of a Kalamazoo College student, it can be hard to step back and watch things from the outside. Since foreign study, I find myself retreating back to my Irish ways of taking a breather to watch life go by.

I know that I have not captured the true essence of Ireland in my words, nor did I expect to. The only way to understand Ireland and the Irish people is to experience them. Let the bit of Irish, which exists in everybody, out as often as you can—it’s worth it and helps you to stay sane.

Kieran Joshi ’94, a math and French double major, studied in Caen, France last fall and winter. She plans to teach in West Africa after graduation.
London to Lille: The Scenic Route

After sitting through weeks of orientation lectures, I was certain that Dr. Joe Fugate repeats “be flexible” and “expect the unexpected” in his sleep. His advice became useful as I learned to deal with my host mother and French society. However, when I traveled his warnings were more true. When I thought I was in control, something bad always seemed to happen—even with only four days left until I flew home.

After a good night’s sleep, I ate breakfast, checked out of my London hotel room, and walked to Victoria Station to catch a train to Dover. From Dover, I planned to take the hovercraft across the English Channel to Calais, France. The ride out of London was peaceful for the first few minutes. At the first stop a mother and her young child climbed aboard. I hold the theory that each car comes equipped with at least one screaming, obnoxious child, and I must have boarded right before their shift started. This little demon proudly exhibited her lung capacity while running up and down the aisle. The only time she was quiet during the whole trip to Dover was when the conductor collected tickets. Then she transformed into a smiling cherub sitting next to her mother. But as soon as the compartment door shut, she started screaming all over again.

When I arrived in Dover I learned that the bus to the hovercraft port was shut down. After walking a mile with my full pack, I was told the hovercrafts going across the Channel would be delayed for three hours because of bad weather. Finally, at one in the afternoon I boarded the Princess Anne and found my seat. I don’t know what made me more nauseated, the rough seas or the nagging attendants constantly trying to sell duty-free items. Normally I would have noticed sooner that a large mob carrying signs and chanting in French was coming toward me. However, constant travel and frustration had worn me down. I’m still not sure of the exact moment when the reality of the situation hit me. Possibly it was when I read the sign: “BUY EUROPEAN CROPS.” Maybe it was when the mob started chanting something about American farmers. Maybe it was a combination of the torches, flags, and farm tools. As the crowd marched quickly toward me, I suddenly made the connection between the farmers protesting near the train tracks and the chanting mob.

“Oh Lord,” I thought. “Now I have the farmers after me.”

When I entered the hotel, I was surprised by the calmness of the receptionist. She acted as if angry mobs walked by on a regular basis. I smiled and walked to the window. After a few minutes, the manager approached and told me the lobby was for paying customers only. I stared at the mob and asked him how much a room cost. He said that a single with no bath or toilet costs about fifty-five American dollars. I looked at the crowd and realized that there was no hope for a night train to anywhere. Hoping to find a cheap place to stay, I put on my backpack and started walking. A few blocks from the station I turned down a street that looked promising. Normally I would have noticed sooner that a large mob carrying signs and chanting in French was coming toward me. However, constant travel and frustration had worn me down. I’m still not sure of the exact moment when the reality of the situation hit me. Possibly it was when I read the sign: “BUY EUROPEAN CROPS.” Maybe it was when the mob started chanting something about American farmers. Maybe it was a combination of the torches, flags, and farm tools. As the crowd marched quickly toward me, I suddenly made the connection between the farmers protesting near the train tracks and the chanting mob.

“Oh Lord,” I thought. “Now I have the farmers after me.”

I quickly ducked into a hotel.

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As I sat in my room later, listening to the police sirens and eating crunchy peanut butter—my only food since breakfast—with my Swiss army knife, Dr. Fugate’s words came back to haunt me. I fell asleep wondering if this had ever happened to him.

Religion major Curt Korten ’94 studied for six months last fall and winter in Strasbourg, France.
Two from Africa

Fajara, The Gambia

I am a wave, tall crested
yet ready to fall
As I fade back to my origin,
another experience topples me over
and restores my humility.

Unleashed and unburdened of my past
I discover what is still unknown in me;
discover what might be now that I can separate
the sludge from my waters.

Cool breezes on a warm shore
create friction in my soul
They shake my every security and
leave me shuddering in
unmolded new flesh.

Black Hands

Beating, Pounding
your rhythms
never cease
They chill the heart as they
blast the stretched skin
over and over again
Creased and callused
they tell the story of a work
that is never finished
Like a tool, you employ
your very flesh,
not machine, nor servant
They don’t rest
They don’t choose

Bess German '94, who is majoring in psychology, participated in the six-month program in Sierra Leone. She wrote "Fajara, The Gambia" while vacationing in Gambia. "Black Hands" was written after Bess attended a drumming show at Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone.
A Glimpse at Another Life

September 12—Quito, Ecuador

Here I am! I’ve just closed the door to my bedroom and breathed a sigh of relief. I’ve only been in Quito for one day so far, and already my mind’s going berserk with so many new things to think about. I’ve met my host parents, two of their sons, and two grandsons (I’ll never keep their names straight); unpacked my stuff in my new bedroom; disobeyed my instructions not to drink the water (I hope I don’t get sick!); and have seen a little bit of the city. My host mother, Beatriz, took me downtown to change money and walked me through the main tourist and shopping district. The area of the city that we visited was very modern—skyscrapers and all, but the sidewalks were lined with street vendors selling all sorts of handicrafts. I was fascinated to see so many indigenous people wearing traditional clothing—the women in long blue skirts, puffed white blouses, and rows and rows of gold beads around their necks. Not a sight from downtown Kalamazoo.

I want to see so much, explore and learn. But it still takes all my concentration to form a complete sentence in Spanish. Well, I have six months here, so I guess I can start by taking things slowly. My goals for tomorrow will be to eat whatever my host mom puts in front of me, find the post office, and to say something more than “Sí, sí, gracias!”

October 24—Quito, Ecuador

Just finished watching my soap opera, "Marielena," with my host mom. I know my friends back at “K" would never believe that I now plan my evenings around watching a cheesy soap opera, but I love it. We always sit in their bedroom—my host parents in bed and me in an armchair. Their bedroom, not the living room, is the social center of the home. My host mother and I watch avidly; every time a commercial comes on she shakes her head and says, "Tanta propaganda." I nod in agreement. Then we talk about what we think will happen in the next episode, and I head back to my bedroom to work on homework. It’s a bonding time for my host mother and me.

The soap opera is part of a comfortable routine that I’m settling into. I know what buses to take to get to the university, what stamps to put on the letters, where to buy cheap chocolate, and enough Spanish to ask about the things I don’t know. But having a routine doesn’t mean that it still isn’t exciting here. Weekends are for traveling. Last weekend I went climbing with Club Andenismo, the university’s mountain-climbing club. This weekend, Jay (another "K" student) and I are planning to take the train going from Ibarra to San Lorenzo on the coast.

January 15—Quito, Ecuador

Classes at the university are over and I don’t miss them at all. I’ve been doing my ethnography, and I’m enjoying learning about Ecuadorian culture by participating. Everyday I visit a home for children of prisoners to observe and help the kids with their schoolwork. Today got pretty stressful as usual. It seems like the children always have so many pages of homework, and the señoritas—the employees there—are always yelling at them to get it all done before prayers.

So I don’t get scolded, I am trying to keep a low profile while helping the first-graders with their work. I don’t know how helpful I am because there are a lot of things I can’t explain in Spanish. Every night I go home and look up new words like capital letter and pencil sharpener. But, I try to be encouraging at least. Today little Roberto was working on really repetitious work, copying the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 over and over in his notebook. When he finished after a half-hour, I asked him what he had written. He pointed at the numbers and said, “A, E, I, O, U.” He looked up at me for approval. I smiled and tried to explain it again. It’s sad, because I know if the señorita quizzes him on his numbers and he gets them wrong again he’ll get his hand slapped with the ruler. I hate to sit there and see the children punished—I feel like crying along with them. Yet it always amazes me, when the homework is over and the kids have a little time to play in the courtyard, they all seem so content, so joyful. With clean clothes, nutritious food, and people who care for them, they are luckier than many kids. Today Carolina, one of the fifth-graders, taught me a rhyming game they play and I felt so, so happy to be included in a little of their lives.

February 25—Isla del Sol, Bolivia

On the Isla del Sol, sitting at a small table in the Posada del Inca, writing by oil lamp and looking out at Lake Titicaca. Jay and I just finished eating the most fabulous supper—three ears of corn, boiled potatoes, fried cheese, and a cucumber and tomato salad. All the food was fresh from the farms on the island. Though we didn’t hesitate to eat, our hosts made a big deal of showing us the greenhouse that they built to grow the vegetables and said, “No colera!” The posada is a nice adobe building that a couple here have built to house visitors. The woman, Maria, keeps running all the way over from her kitchen building to bring the food. They are being so nice to us. We were lucky to find this place—we hiked around the island all day and this is about the only place to stay overnight. I have never ever been anywhere like this island. We could have traveled back five hundred years. There are no cars, no electricity, or stores: just raising
Rebecca Joyce

potatoes, beans, corn and herding sheep and llamas. We walked all day today and never even saw a Coca-Cola ad! I feel out of place yet content. This is not my world. I flew in a plane to get here to Bolivia, I use microwave ovens and eat pizza. I'll be back in that world before too long, but I've had a glimpse of this other life just as real (or more?) than mine. When I'm back home watching the NBA finals, they will be here in the Andes, in the middle of Lake Titicaca planting, harvesting, living their lives.

March 8—Quito, Ecuador

Suddenly close to going home! I'm back in Quito and my flight to the U.S. is in two days. Had to wake up at 2:30 this morning to get a ride back from Salinas de Bolivar. Yesterday Jay and I asked all around town and found that the only way to get from Salinas to the main highway was to ride in a truck bed. It was quite a ride. A family of four was sitting in the front seats, so they kindly said that the two gringos could sit with the cargo in the back. The cold was bad enough (at about eleven thousand feet above sea level), but they also loaded a killer stove in the truck bed with us. Hasta luego! When the truck started bumping down the potholed dirt road, the full-sized metal oven started bouncing and crashing toward us. Jay ended up wedging himself against the side of the truck bed and bracing the oven with his feet for an hour until we got to a paved road.

I guess it was an appropriately wild ride to finish my traveling here. I've traveled in a canoe in the rainforest, on the top of a train to the coast, and in a terrible taxi for five hours across the desert.

Peru...I am really going to miss it here. Of course I'm excited to be going home, but I also keep wondering when I'll be able to visit South America again. I'm sure I'll find a way. Hasta luego!

On the Streets of Quito
Photograph by Jen Mitchell
A young Quiteñan girl adjusts her scarf. Jen, a psychology major, studied in Quito, Ecuador for six months. She will return there this fall for her Senior Individualized Project, working in a medical clinic.

Biology major Rebecca Joyce '94 studied in Quito, Ecuador for six months last fall and winter.
A Firenze

All bags aboard, goodbyes said and last hugs given, I hung my head out the train window to look at my beautiful friends for one final time. And at that moment I felt a whirlwind of emotions and all I could say was, "I can't believe I'm leaving. foreign study is over." The very words brought tears to my eyes. As the train began to roll away, and with one last weeping glance into each other's eyes, we exchanged the love and knowledge of all that we had experienced together. The speed picked up and we waved goodbye until we could no longer see each other, and with my tears I continued to say goodbye to the beautiful city I lived in called Firenze. When the cold wind on my face began to sting, I took my seat in the hallway of the smoky Italian train. I knew that I was leaving the magical city of Florence, the city I fell in love with.

While wondering where foreign study had gone, I realized that in a few short hours I would be in the United States of America. A place I could no longer even picture in my mind. A place for which I felt no excitement to return. What made my feelings for this city so intense? How did this love develop? As if it were a movie, scenes from the affair began to flash through my mind. I watched as the city of Florence unfolded before my eyes.

La Straniera. It is my first morning. I am walking with an acquaintance. Lost, tired, lonely. The streets are bland and vacated. Cold, gray, metallic garage doors hide the shops. Heavy, bolted doors protect the apartment buildings. I'm lost and chilled and trapped on the outside of an unfriendly city. The ancient city walls still exist. The Stranger.

La storia. The morning sun begins creeping into the streets. They're uneven, they're twisting and curving around, unpredictable and never ending. I lift my eyes off the pavement and into the haze of the large, gray, marble eyes of Dante. To my right, a large, open, sunny piazza. My goosebumps begin to melt in the warmth. To my left, the magnificent Cathedral of Santa Croce. I feel the history of the land. I feel the roots of our Western culture. Scholars, philosophers, artisans. I am a speck in time. The history.

La gente. He sweeps the ground in front of his store. He hums to himself. She sets the fruit outside of the shop. He carries the freshly cut flowers in the basket on his bike. He brings them home to his wife of twenty years. She sets the fruit down. She sets the flowers in a vase. She laughs and runs with triumph. I dream in Italian.

La lingua. It's melodious, it's passionate, it's moving. You cannot speak through words alone. It is gestures, it is facial expressions, it is the tone of voice. The words roll through the space between the buildings. They fill the air with their motion. "Ciao, Bella!" she exclaims with a smile. I can understand this. I'm scared, I'm nervous, I'm shy. Italian red wine. I have a conversation with a real Italian. I laugh and run with triumph. I dream in Italian. I awake exhausted. She repeats herself over and over, he doesn't understand me, I fumble with the vocabulary, she answers me in English. Syllables, sounds, I cry with frustration. She tells me I speak well. The foreign words roll up and down, filling the void in the streets. The language.

La bella Città. Colorful, blinding, sparkling. I stand on the historic Ponto Vecchio. I lean over the side of the bridge and look into the flowing River Arno. The hot sun shines on me. The land rises into hills. Fields speckled with olive trees. Italian villas overlook this breathtaking site. Beige walls, rust orange roofs, faded green shutters. The morning wash hangs off the balcony. I smile at my new friend. I squint my eyes of black as I look into the brightness that lies before me. The flowers fill the air with a sweet fragrance. I breathe the air, the same air they breathe. The full spectrum of colors surrounds me, they numb me. The beautiful city.

Lisa M. Varandani '94, a sociology & anthropology major, did a six-month foreign study in Florence, Italy.