



International Perspectives

OSU students studying & working abroad

These and other student stories are online at osu.orst.edu/international/oie

These articles reflect students' experiences during the 2000-2001 academic year. Along with others around the world, our staff at OSU and overseas is disturbed and saddened by recent tragic events. We continue to monitor international developments very closely to ensure student safety on study abroad and internship programs. Faced with such powerful evidence of international tensions, however, we feel more deeply than ever that increased international understanding is an important tool in resolving conflicts. We believe these articles eloquently reflect the increased understanding that can come through international experience.

— Staff in the Office of International Education

Goals for Studying Abroad:

Learn and travel light

Maria (senior in Honors Business Administration and the International Degree) studied on the OSU program in Santander, Spain in spring 2001.

MARIA LORENCE

After traveling and living abroad as a child, I have always wanted to study abroad. The best way to see any other country is to actually live there! Last year I applied and interviewed for the Santander study program, but it didn't seem real until I reached the ferry station in Spain and tried to communicate with my host mom about how to reach her home. After hailing a taxi in the pouring rain with all my luggage and having lunch with my host mom, I was able to settle into my new room. As I lay there that night, fighting the seasickness that was still with me, I didn't know whether to cry because I was homesick, or laugh because I finally realized what I had gotten myself into. However, at that moment I decide to suck it up and enjoy the next three months since this was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

At first, I was a bit anxious about not knowing many other people in the program, but I made such good friends that I was actually happy about going on the trip by myself. Aside from travel and cultural experience, my main goal was to improve my Spanish. I had excellent teachers that drilled us every day and gave us homework, but the best practice comes from speaking, messing up, and getting corrected. It is easy to get around by speaking English, but to really learn the language I had to make the extra effort. Living with a host family or students from that country is essential because they are your biggest learning resource. I spoke with my host mom as much as possible, even giving up some nights out with my friends to hang out with her and her girlfriends. She constantly corrected me, like when I made the mistake of saying that I had a puppy

instead of a cold, and we developed a great friendship. She also helped me plan my weekend trips.

I spent a third of my time in Spain traveling all over the country and some of the continent. My friends and I started in England, and went to Portugal, Barcelona, Sevilla, Granada, Madrid, the south of France, and Italy. As college students, our aim was to travel cheap and see as much as possible. This meant waiting at the station from 9 pm to 3 am for a train, riding in a packed car at night with six smelly Portuguese men, staying at shady hostels, and not getting much sleep. However, these incidents made our experiences more colorful and you can only travel like this when you are young, so enjoy it.

When I was not traveling, I attempted

to experience Santander to its fullest. This meant trying exotic dishes like squids in their ink, seeing historical sights, taking salsa and flamenco dance classes, shopping, going to the beach after school, and staying out all night on weekends to enjoy nightlife.

While in Europe, I also experienced a lot of anti-American feeling. Some Europeans will tell you that they don't agree with you, your president, or what your country stands for. My suggestion is to smile, accept it and move on because after a few months abroad you will appreciate everything the US has to offer.

I would recommend travel abroad to anyone who is even remotely considering it. Pack light and experience as much as possible, because you can always sleep when you get home.



Maria Lorence, program director and OSU Spanish instructor Anuncia Escala, Amy Grile, and Lisa Love at a castle in Segovia, Spain.



Frans Bambang and costumed youth in trendy district of Tokyo.

Engineering student adapts to Japan

Frans (senior in Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering with a minor in Business Administration) is enrolled in the Oregon University System exchange program at Aoyama Gakuin University.

FRANS BAMBANG

As a child I liked to watch cartoons, especially Japanese cartoons or Anime. I also read Japanese comic books or Manga. But as I grow older and learn about Japan's achievements, I am absolutely amazed by them. That is why I started studying Japanese four years ago and why I went to Japan.

Japan has 120 million people in a

country the size of California. Most of it is mountainous, with little arable land. The country is poor in natural resources and was heavily damaged during War World II. General McArthur predicted it would take at least 50 years to restore Japan to its pre-war condition. Despite these discouraging facts, Japan is now one of the world's most developed countries. Since the mid 1970s Japan has shown its power, and in the mid 1980s Japan's expanding economy invaded America with its products. As a major in Industrial

See JAPAN, page 4

OSU student fulfills dream to study down under



Emily Maize gets some close attention from a kangaroo near the campus of Charles Sturt University where she was an exchange student.

Emily (senior in zoology) studied on the OSU exchange program with Charles Sturt University near Wagga Wagga, Australia, from winter 2000 through winter 2001.

EMILY MAIZE

Stepping off the plane in Fiji, my stopover between LA and Sydney, the reality of my situation was sinking in. The air was actually moist and though it was just 6 am, the rising sun foreshadowed the hot day coming. I walked towards the terminal, beautiful Fijian women welcoming me on either side, with a smile on my face reaching from ear to ear. I couldn't believe that this day had come. My childhood dream of visiting Australia was about to come true and I was so proud to know I had done it all on my own. Of course, I met no objections to my wild idea of spending a year studying abroad, but I had submitted the application, sent for a visa, booked the flight, and worked two jobs so I could afford it all. Now the perseverance had paid off, for it was I who was beginning what would turn out to be the best year of my life.

I studied at a university in Wagga Wagga. Though this is where my formal education took place, the learning never ended. It continued as I maneuvered through the city's subway system, hiked to the peak of Ayers Rock (Uluru), watched Olympic medals being won and lost, befriended kangaroo, and dove amongst sharks on the

Great Barrier Reef.

Besides all my wild and wonderful adventures, one of the greatest aspects of my trip was the period of self-discovery. Imagine going to a place where you know no one and no one knows you. It sounds scary and I admit there were times I longed to be amongst old friends, but for the most part it allowed me to be a person I never knew existed. I had no preconceptions to live up to, no stereotypes weighing on my shoulders, no one to remind me of past mistakes; my slate had been wiped clean and I was free to start over. I was not "so-and-so's little sister", nor someone's ex-girlfriend; I was simply "Emily". This was invigorating and I reached out to try things I would have otherwise not done. I made fabulous new friendships and sought out new experiences. I became comfortable traveling by myself and learned how easy it was to meet others doing the same. Living life to the fullest allowed me to reacquire myself with my feelings and my place in life. It offered me a freedom I had never felt before and the confidence to cherish that. I came home stronger, knowing that I could tackle even the most difficult situations.

So would I study abroad again? I'm already planning to. Would I recommend it to others? I'd tell them it will change their life.

Mexico



Jeremy Baker (senior in Natural Resources) studied aquaculture on the OSU program in Guaymas, Mexico in spring 2000. Jeremy (above right, with staff member Fernando Dominguez at the pearl farm), recalls, "I walked past this bay on my way to class and some days I watched dolphins swimming. I often snorkeled and caught many a night's meal. Fish, muscles and clams were great, sautéed with butter and fresh garlic from the market up the street."

A cultural comparison

John (senior in Honors Biochemistry & Biophysics and the International Degree) enrolled in the Oregon University System exchange program at the University of Tübingen in fall 1998, and chose to stay for three years.

JOHN WILSON

Coming from Oregon State University, founded in 1858, I thought I had studied at a university with roots. This, however, was clarified in my first conversation with German floor-mates. Around our kitchen table I was informed that 1) Tübingen had far more tradition than any university in the Americas and 2) since the US was founded only in 1776, even calling it a country is a stretch. Well, a university founded in 1477 has a lot of history, but it lacks traditional events common at OSU such as barbecues and parties. And although people have lived in the region for thousands of years, Germany did not exist even as a Confederation until 1815. So who is right? Is university tradition defined by 500 years of names and discoveries, or by annual events, connections to the past? What makes a country? A place and language with their history, or an independent political structure and accomplishments since then? In general, my experience has shown that Germans would argue for the first definition and Americans for the second. In Germany, simply being where people have met and talked for hundreds of years is highly valued, and occupying a particular space that has been common ground for ages can be extremely important.

Exactly this idea stands behind my floor-mates' criticism of my idea of my university's "tradition." In the US, not even Harvard, founded in 1636, can lay claim to old ground in intellectual fields. US universities have produced scholars like Pauling, who have recently delved deep into the theoretical realm, but no one like Kepler, who studied at Tübingen in 1587 and went on to formulate fundamental laws of astronomy and lay the groundwork of calculus. Likewise, as a country the US has a short history and thus lacks a characteristic fundamentally valued by Germans.

In conversation Germans may go back to Teutonic tribes and include names and dates from prehistory to the present. Family conversations often turn into passionate debates about some historical event. Compare this to the US, where people struggle to remember when independence was declared and know little about the World Wars except that "America won!" Despite this curious lack of his-

See GERMANY, page 3

Student attends university in S. Africa

James (senior in Forest Engineering) studied on the OSU exchange with the University of Stellenbosch in winter and spring of 2001.

JAMES GALLOWAY

When I talked with the Head Advisor in Forestry about studying abroad, I discovered that Professor Loren Kellogg had spent 1997-98 in South Africa so there was a new exchange program for forestry students with the University of Stellenbosch. After talking with Dr. Kellogg, I was really interested in the program. I was the first student on the exchange, so there was a lot of support from both universities to get a student involved. After getting a visa, numerous vaccinations, and a ticket, I was on my way.

Flying into Cape Town International Airport last January, the first thing I saw was millions of low-income blacks living in very poor conditions. I had traveled to both first- and third-world countries and was somewhat prepared for South Africa's evident social problems. I had also seen CNN's depiction of the crime hotspots of the country. At first, I was most likely overly cautious of people. I realized quickly that you certainly need to watch your back, but as in other places most people are only interested in learning from you and visiting about

your country.

Before classes began in mid February, late in their summer, I took a summer school course called bosbou in Afrikaans that was offered by forestry faculty. We toured the country, seeing different aspects of forestry and environmental conservation each day (which was sometimes beneficial, often not). At night we stayed at campgrounds or company-owned buildings, and had a braai (similar to an American BBQ) hosted by the company that had given the day's tour. Looking back, that was one of the best times of my experience.

When classes began, my first surprise was that students in each major don't know their classes in advance. On the first day of the semester, the students show up, look for the schedule for their major, and try to find their classrooms. I found this comforting. I was new and had no idea what was going on. Fortunately, neither did anyone else. Classes did not require a great amount of effort. Students are graded on a midterm (40%) and final exam (60%). You must have 50% or better to pass and 75% or better to get a high mark. Half the questions are simple so everyone can pass and the next 50% are so hard you cannot do well. On exams you do not lose points for incorrect answers, only gain points for correct answer.

This results in high quantity and low quality. All in all I was unhappy with the grading system but was still able to do very well.

Outside the classroom, friends and I hung out at the Mugg and Bean coffee shop in downtown Stellenbosch, went to the local mall, swam at the beach, visited local wine farms and pubs and enjoyed dining in the area. Before I left, a friend and I flew to Johannesburg, hired a car and drove through Kruger National Park. They were the best two weeks in the country. We saw lions, leopard, cheetah, elephants, giraffes, numerous species of monkey and a genuine Zulu war dance. Kruger is about the size of the UK, so you never feel that you are in a park.

My educational experiences in South Africa were valuable, but I feel I gained more from experiencing the culture and seeing the world from a new perspective. As Americans we tend to think the world revolves around us. In terms of world politics and economics it often does. My stay in South Africa helped me realize that there are billions of people whose lives are completely different from what I know. Many of them live a subsistence lifestyle where life, death, murder, and rape are common. I am very thankful for all the opportunities I have been given.

Greece provides a chance to make new friends, travel, and learn outside the classroom

Katina (senior in Interior Design with a minor in Art History) studied in Greece during spring of 2000.

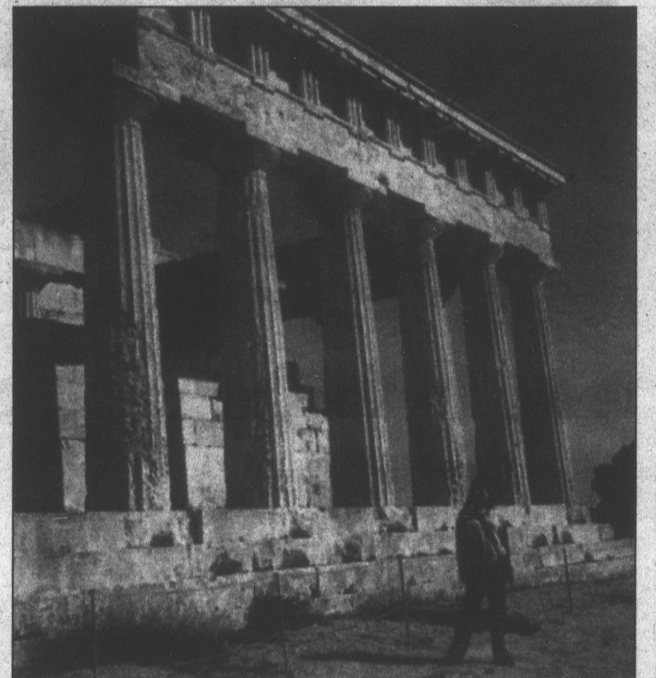
KATINA RIGALL

There is no contest. By far my best term at OSU was when I studied at the Athens Centre, I've always loved to travel and see new places, so when I learned OSU had study abroad programs, it wasn't a matter of whether I would go, but when and where.

Many people have asked, "Why Greece?" a question to which I have many answers. Look around at campus buildings. It is rare to see one that does not incorporate elements of Classical Greek design, a style that was not only beautiful but also extremely well engineered long before modern technology. With my major and minor I may be biased, but why wouldn't anyone want to visit the birthplace of Western architecture to see the ruins up close and personal? But that is just one reason I chose to go to Greece.

Another is that Greece is a sunny, beautiful, Mediterranean country with amazing food and gorgeous islands. The cost of the study abroad program included group field trips to places like Crete, Corinth, Olympia, and Meteora. On weekends and during the week-and-a-half midterm break, we all went gallivanting on our own around Greece and other parts of Europe and Africa. Luckily, teachers at the Athens Centre knew we were learning by experience, so they didn't assign too much homework.

During the mid-term break, I went island hopping with my friend Lynn, also from Oregon State. We'd never met until we went to Athens, but we became good friends. We formed a special bond when we literally got stranded on the island of Santorini. Nobody else understands the problem with being stranded on arguably the most beautiful Greek island, but I was freaking out and Lynn was not enjoying herself either. The weather got stormy and the ferries stopped running. I started thinking we would never be able to leave (I'm not always a rational person). Eventually the winds died down and we caught a ferry. It was so packed with people trying to leave that if it had sunk, it would have been the Titanic all over again. Excluding this slight trauma, the trip was one of the most enjoyable excursions I made in Europe.



Katina Rigall on the island of Aegina at the Temple of Aphaia.

I traveled around Europe before and after my term in Athens, but I stuck to traveling in Greece during the twelve-week program. In a way, I felt like I'd found my long-lost home, and I wanted to soak in Greek culture while I had the chance. One of the little things that connected me to Greece was my name, "Katina," which is common there. I was named after my mother's Greek friend, and people here often have trouble with my name. However, in Greece people assumed I was a Greek American returning to my homeland. This was cool because they are family oriented, passionate about their heritage and warm toward people who share it. I loved the way they pronounced my name, and how they immediately treated me like "one of them."

I'm so glad that I seized the opportunity to study at the Athens Centre. I learned more in that one term than all my other terms at OSU combined! And I'm not just talking about the classes. It is comfortable to be back home, but sometimes I feel homesick for Greek food and my little apartment in the heart of Athens. How lucky was I, to get up every morning for three months and see the Acropolis and Parthenon on my way to class?

Meeting the challenge: Internship in Zimbabwe inspires future surgeon

Amber (junior in Honors Microbiology/ Pre-Med option with a minor in Chemistry) completed an international internship at Chidamoyo Christian Hospital in rural Zimbabwe in spring and summer of 2001.

AMBER LEIS

"So, do you want to close this patient up?" My heart drops as I meet the doctor's gaze. We have been standing over the young woman for two hours. Her breathing, slow and steady, has been our metronome in this symphony of surgery. It was my first time in the operating room. I had traded shoes for galoshes, tucked my hair under a cloth cap, then learned to scrub, put on a sterile gown, and pull on gloves without contaminating them. I was then told to stand without touching anything. I felt like a caricature of the mad doctor with my hands held aloft, the smell of latex rising to my face.

The patient was wheeled in on a gurney. She looked pregnant, her uterus swollen with fibroids. I watched the doctor insert a slender needle into her spine to anesthetize her. I helped drape her sleeping form with heavy blue cloths, with a hole over her abdomen to reveal dark skin. As I began laying out instruments I couldn't even name, fitting blades to scalpels and sorting scissors, I felt the silent coursing of adrenaline through my veins.

A thin line of blood as blade breaks skin. I dab it with a sterile rag, pass tools across the body, try to anticipate the surgeon's needs, watch in awe. I see adipose tissue gave way to mesentery and suddenly through one pink muscular barrier, a cavity! A basket of organs strewn over one another and the doctor sorting with deft hands to find the right places to cut. I am mesmerized at this lesson in anatomy, enthralled, as I watch the unparalleled beauty of the human machine laid bare before me.

The shrouded body was bright blue in its cloth, bright white in

the gauze, bright red in the blood. There were dots and cysts and messes everywhere, and a cascade of light on the doctor's hands. When the uterus was finally freed, the doctor lifted it and placed it my hands. Shock. Miracle.

Gently the surgeon pulls the tissues together, swiftly tying knots in the gossamer sutures, working back through the layers. Muscles, then adipose, now only a layer of skin remains and he's asking me to close the patient! My hands tremble, then steady as my fear of failure gives way to focused precision. He guides my hands, shows me how to tie knots with the fingers of one hand. I feel awkward, but he is pleased.

Afterwards, as nurses prepare for our next patient, he smiles, "I hope you don't change your mind and decide to become a scrub nurse, because you ought to be the surgeon." He watches the blood rise to my face, smiles again, and turns back to the operating table.

Two views of Ecuador

Joyce (senior in Bioresource Research and the International Degree) studied on the Oregon University System exchange program in Ecuador in fall 2000 and remained there to do an international internship in winter and spring 2001.

JOYCE MAYFIELD

During seven months in Ecuador, I experienced both sides of Ecuadorian life. For three months I studied at a university in Quito and stayed with a well-off family. This part of my trip taught me about Ecuadorian history and causes of current social and environmental dilemmas. I enjoyed salsa dancing, hiking a glacier at 1,500 feet, camping in a tropical rain cloud forest, visiting national parks and a natural hot spring, attending concerts, visiting museums and seeing traditional Andean villages.

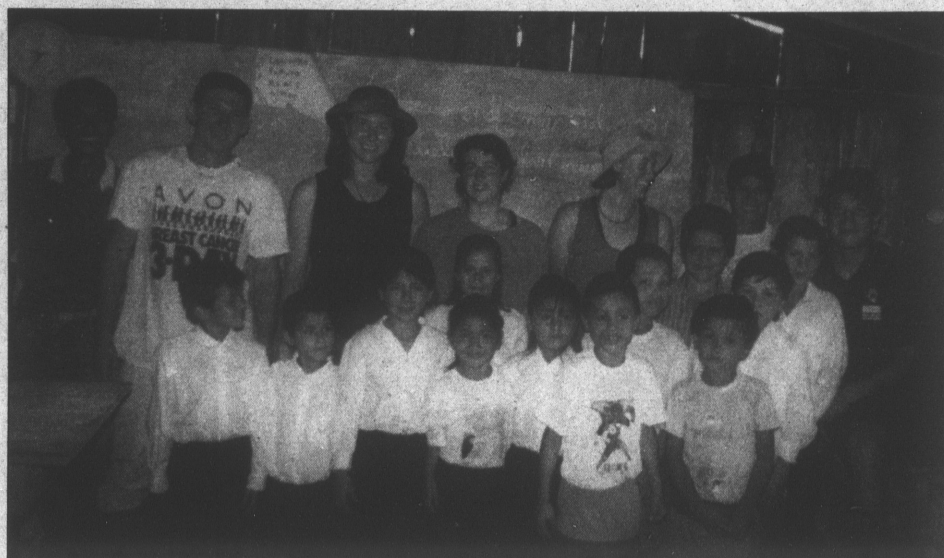
As a Bioresource Research major, I was interested in causes of environmental degradation in a developing country. Environmental problems were much more visible in Ecuador than in the US. Sewage systems in cities led to the nearest stream or to the ocean. From a bus you could see treeless farmland extending to a cliff eroding because there was no ground cover. As in most developing countries, the economy is based on natural resources (oil, bananas, and shrimp) but

management is far from sustainable or environmentally/inhabitant friendly.

When the term ended, I interned at Bilsa, a biological reserve in a tropical forest on the coastal plain, where I saw how most Ecuadorians live, as rural subsistence farmers. Here time moved very slowly. Life was about family and good weather to grow crops. It was challenging to consider the disparity between the technology and conveniences in my life and how people in other countries live. At Bilsa my activities included hiking, reforestation, conducting a health survey of their reforestation project, visiting communities, and seed collecting. The area's biodiversity let me see sloths, monkeys, unique reptiles and amphibians, and an endangered bird not previously reported in the area.

Because of the isolation and difficult traveling conditions, contact between communities is infrequent. When the local school had grade school graduation, other volunteers and I from Bilsa went to participate in the fun. The parents were dressed up, and the children, also wearing their best clothes (school uniforms), were called up one by one to get a certificate. Most families had no pictures of themselves, so the teacher borrowed a camera from a volunteer to take pictures.

After the ceremony we played football. First the



Joyce Mayfield (third from left) and other volunteers at the Bilsa tropical reserve in Ecuador stand with local students at their graduation ceremony.

children played, sweating and grinning in the heat, as mud from the field was thrown up into their faces. It got hotter, and the children stripped off their nice shirts and played bare-chested. The mud got slippery and soon they were covered face to foot in mud. Next the Ecuadorian women played against female volunteers from Bilsa. They played vigorously in the increasingly sticky mud and the volunteers soon tired out, probably proving to them that foreign women are weak. Then

the serious game began, between men of the village. After everyone was exhausted, families walked to the nearby shanty-shop to buy cookies and beer. The other volunteers and I walked home, exhausted, happy and covered in mud.

My experiences were at times challenging, at times eye opening, and at times better than I could have dreamed. I can say that I went to study abroad looking for a new reality to my world and found it.

Do not try this at home

Erik (senior in Political Science, French, and the International Degree) spent the 2000-01 academic year in Lyon, France.

ERIK NIELSEN

Many people who return from extended stays in another country come back all starry-eyed wanting to explain how much they've changed, or how the world is bigger than people not fortunate enough to have had a similar experience could possibly understand. Before leaving to spend the last academic year in France, I vowed never to spout such nonsense. People like that annoyed me, and I didn't want to be seen as

an idiot who considered himself a modern day Christopher Columbus just because I had spent a little time away from home. Without wanting to break my promises to myself, I have to admit that my decision to go to France was one of the most important and (dare I say it!) life-altering choices I have ever made. I do not mean you will come back as a completely new person, unrecognizable to people who knew you before. You will most likely return as the same flawed human being, but you will undoubtedly be more mature and less naïve.

Another disclaimer I should mention is that any year abroad



Erik Nielsen (right) with Swedish basketball player Jokim Bloom (center) and fellow student Erik Nelson.

will not be entirely filled with fun and great times. In fact, you will most likely have more stressful times than in your comfortable home surroundings. This is to be expected, and in fact it is desirable. Living far away, you must often do unfamiliar things, and usually there is no one else you can count on to get them done. I can't express to you the amazing sense of self-confidence that comes when you realize you just explained your way out of being arrested in a foreign language to two undercover cops after your friend, a 6'11" Swedish professional basketball player, had puked all over the bar and their shoes. Well, you may find yourself in more

plausible situations, but this happened to me and you'd be surprised what may happen to you.

Finally, I have to say that studying abroad is about more than learning a language. I am very happy with my French after a year in Lyon, but what I learned about myself and the world was even more valuable. I expected to come back seeing the world as a smaller place. In fact, I now realize just how big the world is, yet feel much more capable of dealing with it. I hope that doesn't make me sound too much like a starry-eyed Christopher Columbus wannabe, but it's the truth. Really.

GERMANY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

torical knowledge, everyone from neighbors to US senators uses history to back an argument (though experts may consider the history inaccurate).

America seems to have a selective memory for history. On the whole, we remember few details and no failures. We manage to forget the US concentration camps for over 112,000 Japanese Americans (1942-1949). And who remembers that the US executed its own Holocaust with Native Americans, even offering blankets laced with small pox after war was not effective enough?

Compare this attitude toward history with that in Germany. Twice defeated in the only two World Wars, in which the mop-up of the first arguably set the stage for the second, Germans are now very unpatriotic. Flags can be waved in one instance: soccer games. Every student studies the Holocaust, and in general, the 50 million German Americans have more pride in their heritage than the 75 million Germans in Germany. The influence of history on Germany has been to virtually eliminate the show of pride in one's country and hyper-sensitize the entire country to the opinions of other countries. While Germany has taken the lessons of history perhaps a bit too hard, America has not yet learned to say "Yes, we messed up."

So what do we take from this? I recommend that we try to learn from each other, try to see where "we" (whoever "we" might be) might have gone too far or fallen short. Perhaps we can avoid some mistake that otherwise would be made. Maybe

"Garbage gear" makes a hit in South Africa

Laura (senior in Environmental Sciences) is one of two OSU students who went to South Africa on the International Undergraduate Research Program in summer of 2001. She and Tasha Ludwick (senior in Honors Environmental Sciences) worked with school children in Pniel, in the Northern Cape province, as part of their research project.

LAURA HUNTER

Before we went to Pniel, I made a hat out of garbage and wove bracelets from plastic bags. Our first class included kids ages 5-7. When I came in wearing my "garbage gear," they laughed because I looked so stupid. I showed them a poster with different types of litter and they learned about the best ways to dispose of it. Afterwards, some students made medals out of garbage to use in games the next day, while others worked on environmental and water conservation posters and posters advertising the rubbish clean up day.

The second day we played games—it was a blast! I ran the garbage obstacle course, where students ran to different areas of the schoolyard and picked up litter that was strategically placed. Tasha ran other games. At break, one of my favorite students, Stella, came up and said that some kids wanted me to take their picture. When I pulled out my camera, every student in the schoolyard rushed over to get in on the action. It was so cute!

On the third day, the students knew our names and were getting comfortable with us. When one class lost interest, I quickly took a student outside, had him put on the garbage hat and bracelets, and told him to strut around like a model when he went

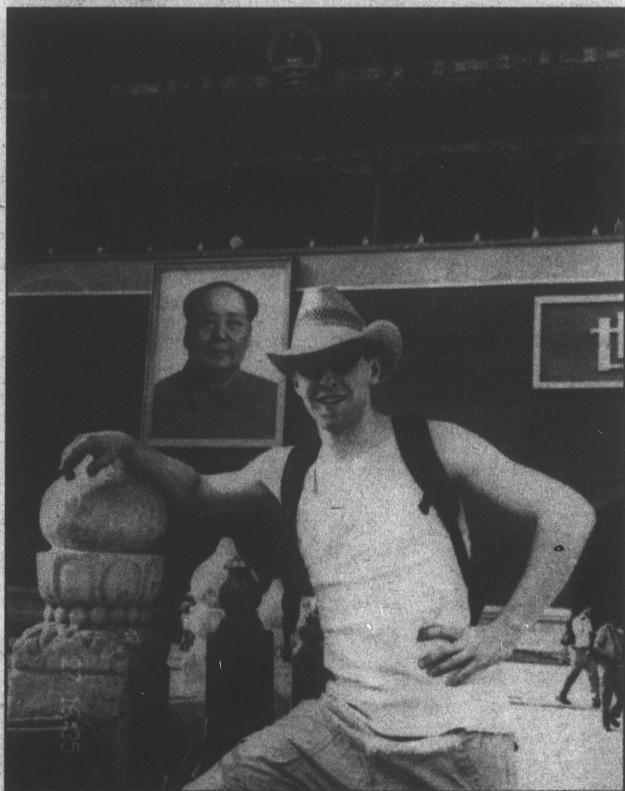
back to class. The kids cracked up and it was the highlight of the day. I also tried speaking Afrikaans, their first language, to see if they could understand me, and one little boy answered. He must have wondered why I spoke mostly English but spontaneously spurted out Afrikaans! That day Stella showed me a bracelet just like mine that she had made out of plastic bags the night before. The students were definitely learning!

The day before we left, Tasha and I bought 200 hot dogs, oranges, prizes, plastic bags and gloves and prepared for our final event, the big rubbish clean up day. The students had helped us draw a community map so we would know where to place the ten groups. The next morning, every group set out with three garbage bags to pick up litter. We intended to collect at most 40 bags, but by the time it was over, the kids had brought in 120!!! The students were exhausted and so hungry it was unbelievable! I don't think they realized that this was the last time we would see them, but I'll always remember them saying goodbye to us with their faces smeared with ketchup.



Laura Hunter (right) and Tasha Ludwick at the University of Stellenbosch, east of Cape Town in South Africa.

Beijing



Chris Pahl (senior in Agricultural and Research Economics and the International Degree) studied on the Oregon University System's program in Beijing during winter/spring of 2001. Here he stands next to a large poster of Mao Zedong at the Heavenly Gate in Tianamen Square, a favorite photo spot for both Chinese and foreign tourists. He has returned to study there during fall of 2001. He says he appreciates eating authentic Chinese food and learning the language, and adds, "more importantly, I enjoy learning the culture and making Chinese friends."

An adventure off the beaten track

Katie (sophomore in Sociology with a minor in French) studied on the Oregon University System program in Lyon during 2000-01.

KATIE WILSON

Exchange experiences mature a person on several levels. My first year-long exchange to Belgium, as a high school junior in 1997, presented cultural and linguistic battles. The support and encouragement of fellow exchangees made that year successful. When I went on the 2000-2001 exchange to Lyon, France, my hope was to stray from the well-worn path of the "groupie exchange" and deepen my involvement in the culture and language. My educational, recreational and personal choices taught me perseverance, strength and commitment, and produced an intensely maturing experience.

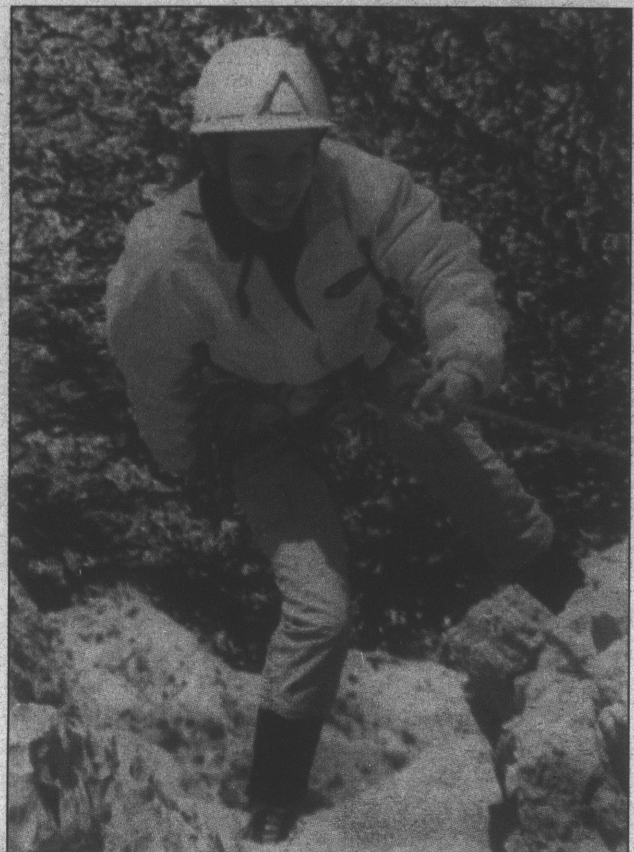
To help cover my costs, I taught 15 classes a week in four schools in Lyon. How does a 20 year-old with no teaching experience educate over 200 elementary-aged French kid on the subtleties of American English and US culture? I had to answer this question as I stared into the faces of squirming, pigtailed foreigners, insistent on their love of the Backstreet Boys and their plans to marry Brittany Spears. So many times I wanted to quit, exhausted from learning the art of discipline and the hours of planning. However, I chose to see the job through, knowing that if I were to leave, there would be no one to fill my position. Besides helping me realize that I don't want to be a teacher, those children taught me what it means to be responsible and committed.

Lyon was a base camp for many maturing recreational experiences. Instead of joining group excursions to castles, vineyards and museums, I created my own adventures. On the nearby

Mediterranean, where crumbling limestone cliffs offered incredible climbing opportunities, I dangled 500 feet over the azure water after a failed attempt at a handhold, trying to figure out how to get back on the rock. On the Tunisian island of Djerba, a two-hour flight away, I picked up a little Arabic, learned that bartering is a big part of getting acquainted, and spent hours discussing politics. April took me to Paris, where I met my father and ran my first marathon. We put a twist on tourism as we ran through the streets admiring historical monuments. In the last 10 kilometers, however, I focused more on the finish line than the Tour d'Eiffel, repeating, "I'm tough, I'm tough." France gave me two gifts that day. The first was a fifth place in my category, among 28,000 runners. The second was realizing how powerful I am.

Before going to France, I had dated a lot in lieu of sticking with one guy, favoring friendships over intensely emotional relationships. My exchange year offered me an unexpected chance to learn that although a long-term, committed relationship is more difficult, it can reap a higher return. My partner and I had no friends or family nearby to offer opinions and guidance, no one to fall back on or tell us to slow things down. I learned to be sensitive and compromise. Being with him made me realize that a truly loving relationship takes work, and if it's easy, someone's not working hard enough.

The educational, recreational and personal adventures that created my year in France have become priceless tools I will use to work toward new goals. The lessons in commitment, strength and perseverance will help me remember that the right way is not the easy way, but that I can do it, because...I'm tough.



Katie Willson dangles above the azure waters of the Mediterranean.

France



Samnang Yun (postbac majoring in French after earning a degree in Health Promotion and Education) spent 2000-01 at Université Lyon II Lumière in Lyon, where he especially enjoyed taking courses in French literature. As a Cambodian American living in France, he was able to share his education and knowledge with both the French and Cambodian communities. He volunteered to teach Cambodian literature and helped a Cambodian radio station promote good health practices. At the same time, he says, "I learned from these communities as we discussed health care systems, education, philosophy, social issues, languages, and most importantly, our personal experiences."

JAPAN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Manufacturing Systems, I studied Japan's amazing manufacturing systems, especially the Toyota "Just In Time" system (JIT). When I interned at two companies in OSU's Multiple Engineering Cooperative Program (MECOP), people there could still remember the 80s, when Japanese companies thoroughly overwhelmed them.

I arrived at Aoyama Gakuin University on April 3, 2001. AGU is among the top universities in Japan and offers various majors including International Business and Mechanical Engineering. The educational system is more relaxed, but to my surprise classes have an average of ten or more exams per term. I chose to live with Japanese students in the dormitory, Jousei Ryo. My first impression was not too great. The night I arrived, I was exhausted and could not understand a word they were saying but they still tried to show me the entire place. After several months, I have come to love the dorm, which holds many fun events where we meet Japanese students. Most people are really friendly, and even the toughest looking guy may be very nice when you talk to him. The food is plentiful and

very healthy. I have lost at least 10 pounds.

And the location is just unbelievable. It is in Omotesando, the most expensive part of Tokyo, the world's most expensive city. I am only a five-minute walk from campus and a ten-minute walk from train and subway stations. The beautiful campus feels like a park in the middle of Tokyo. I have been to other major cities in the world but Tokyo is something different. Many things about it amaze me, including the way the Japanese use space efficiently. Building structures extend from several stories underground to almost one hundred stories above ground. Every possible space is utilized, yet buildings still have artistic touches.

I encourage you to experience living abroad, and especially to consider Japan. You will not only gain language skills, but you will also become stronger and more adaptive. I could go on and on about my experience in Japan but there are things you need to experience yourself. If you have specific questions, please contact me at Bambang@enr.orst.edu.

Tokyo



Sarah Gulde (senior in Mathematics), who studied at Waseda University during 2000-01, is pictured above far left with her host family, the Hayashis. One highlight was celebrating holidays with her own parents, who came to visit from the U.S., and family members who still live in Japan. Sarah adds, "My experiences in Japan gave me a new perspective on my place in the world. I was illiterate and often ignorant, but people around me were incredibly helpful and understanding. My struggle to learn to read and speak made me appreciate how hard people who come to the U.S. have to work to get along in our society. Students who go abroad learn more than they bargained for. It is an absolutely essential experience for anyone who intends to live in a larger world."

Check out Fall Information Meetings on International Opportunities!

Meetings are from 4-5 pm, in rooms listed below

- AUSTRALIA: (various programs, some restricted by major)
Appl. due: April 15, April 30
- AUSTRIA: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Nov. 1 (winter/spring), May 1 (fall)
- CANADA: New Brunswick, British Columbia
Appl. due: Feb. 1 (semester/year programs)
- CHINA - BEIJING: Thurs. Oct. 11, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Oct. 26 (winter/spring); March 1 (fall)
- CHINA - HONG KONG: (business majors)
Appl. due: March 1 (semester, Aug.-Dec.)
- DENMARK: (business or engineering majors)
Appl. due: Feb. 15 (MBA); March 1 (undergrads)
- ECUADOR: Wed. Nov. 7, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Oct. 16 (winter/spring); Feb. 15 (fall or year)
- ENGLAND - LONDON: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Nov. 1 (winter), Jan. 15 (spring); May 1 (fall)
- FINLAND: (Exercise & Sport Science majors only)
Appl. due: March 1 (semester or year programs)
- FRANCE - ANGERS: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Nov. 1 (winter/spring), May 1 (summer/fall)
- FRANCE - LYON, POITIERS: Thurs. Nov. 8, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Feb. 15 (year-long)
- GHANA: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Nov. 1 (winter/spring), May 1 (fall)
- GERMANY: Tues. Nov. 6, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Dec. 15 (spring); Feb. 1 (year-long)
- GREAT BRITAIN: Wed. Nov. 7, MU 206
Appl. due: March 1 (year-long programs)
- GREECE: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Jan. 15 (spring), May 1 (fall)
- ITALY - FLORENCE: (art majors)
Appl. due: Feb. 1 (semester programs)
- ITALY - MACERATA: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Nov. 1 (winter/spring), May 1 (fall)
- ITALY - SIENA: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Nov. 1 (winter), Jan. 15 (spring); May 1 (fall)
- INT'L INTERNSHIPS: Wed. Oct. 17, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Nov. 15 (spring); Jan. 25 (summer); April 15 (fall)
- INT'L UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH: Thurs. Oct. 25, 448 Snell
Applications accepted year-round
- INT'L DEGREE: Tues. Nov. 13, 448 Snell
Applications accepted year-round
- JAPAN: Wed. Nov. 21, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Oct. 1 (AGU year-long); Feb. 1 (fall/year, Waseda); Nov. 1 (spring, Waseda)
- KOREA: (term/semester/year programs)
Appl. due: Oct. 16 (winter/spring); Feb. 15 (fall/year)
- MEXICO: Wed. Nov. 14, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Oct. 16 (winter/spring); Feb. 15 (fall or year)
- NEW ZEALAND: (science, agriculture, forest recreation majors)
Appl. due: April 30 (year-long beginning Feb.)
- NORWAY: (business majors)
Appl. due: March 1 (semester, Aug.-Dec.)
- RUSSIA: (term/semester/year-long programs)
Appl. due: Oct. 16 (winter/spring); March 1 (fall/year)
- SOUTH AFRICA: (forestry and natural resources majors)
Appl. due: April 15
- SPAIN - OVIEDO: Tues. Oct. 16, MU 206
Appl. due: Nov. 1 (winter/spring), May 1 (summer, fall)
- SPAIN - SANTANDER: Tues. Oct. 16, Kidd 350
Appl. due: Nov. 5 (spring); Feb. 11 (fall)
- SPAIN - SANTANDER: Thurs. Nov. 15, 448 Snell
Appl. due: March 15 (year-long program)
- THAILAND: Tues. Oct. 16, 448 Snell
Appl. due: Oct. 16 (winter/spring); Feb. 15 (year, fall)

If you cannot attend a meeting, or none is scheduled, contact us for more information.

Office of International Education
444 Snell Hall 541-737-3006
oregonstate/international/oi