

SECTION II:

**Engaging Students and the Community  
through Study Abroad, Service-Learning,  
and Civic Engagement**



## CHAPTER 5

# Reflections on War, Nation, and Identity:

## AMERICAN UNDERGRADUATES ABROAD

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**Abstract:** Study abroad is increasingly a key component of U.S. universities' efforts to both create and solidify their commitments to international education. Often positioned as part of an effort to expand students' worldview, study abroad is also seen as a way to improve American undergraduates' ability to negotiate a global workplace. This chapter takes a different approach to analyzing American students' experiences abroad, by focusing attention on how they negotiate their national, American identity during a time of war. In doing so, I argue that for the students who participated in this research, making sense of their national identity was of considerable more importance than attempting to form a global consciousness. While this aspect of the study abroad experience is often neglected or overlooked in the rush to "sell" students on the benefits of a global outlook, I assert that from an educational perspective, the possibility of raising students' awareness and critical reflection on their national identity—particularly in the relatively nationalistic and isolationist context of the United States—should be more clearly centered in discussions of study abroad.

Study abroad is increasingly a key component of U.S. universities' efforts to both create and solidify their commitments to international education.<sup>1</sup> Often positioned as part of an effort to expand students' worldview, study abroad is also

seen as a way to improve American undergraduates' ability to negotiate a global workplace. For example, Northwestern University promotes study abroad as a way to become a "global citizen," while the University of Georgia suggests that students study abroad to broaden their horizons and "gain a new perspective."<sup>2</sup>

This essay, and the research project on which it is based, takes a different perspective on analyzing how American undergraduates give meaning to their experiences outside of the United States. Instead of trying to understand whether and how American students' outlooks become more global, I focus attention on how they negotiate their national, American identity during a time of war. In doing so, I argue that, for the students who participated in this research, making sense of their national identity was of considerably more importance than attempting to form a global consciousness (see McCabe, 2001). Students became acutely aware of their American identity as they traveled outside of the United States and this realization, and struggle, shaped their encounter with the rest of the world (Dolby, 2004). While this aspect of the study abroad experience is often neglected or overlooked in the rush to "sell" students on the benefits of a global outlook (Bolen, 2001), I assert that from an educational perspective, the possibility of raising students' awareness and critical reflection on their national identity—particularly in the relatively nationalistic and isolationist context of the United States—should be more clearly centered in discussions of study abroad.

In the balance of this essay, I first briefly review the current context of study abroad in the United States and the relevant literature on nation and national identity. I describe the research study on which this essay is based, giving details of data collection and analysis. I then present qualitative data from interviews with returned study abroad students that examines how the negotiation of their American identity was at the center of their experience abroad. I reflect on how this phase of the research study is connected to an earlier phase of the study that explored similar questions, yet in a different context. Finally, I suggest future directions for research in this area.

## **STUDY ABROAD IN THE UNITED STATES: THE CURRENT CONTEXT**

Though growing in popularity in recent years, study abroad is still unlikely to be a part of the typical U.S. student's undergraduate experience. In academic year 2005–2006 (the most recent year for which figures are available), 223,534 students at American universities studied abroad (Institute of International Education, 2007). While this number is 150 percent the number who studied abroad a decade ago, it still represents only a tiny percentage of all undergraduates. Over one-third (37 percent) of U.S. students who study abroad do so for one semester. Enrollment

in short term programs has grown dramatically in the past few years, with 52 percent of students who study abroad doing so for a period less than eight weeks. Only 5.5 percent of students who study abroad do so for an entire academic year; thus most students who study abroad (approximately 94.5 percent) are abroad for only a relatively short period of time (Institute of International Education, 2007).

Much of the growth in the number of students studying abroad can be attributed to increased institutional support of such initiatives under the larger rubric of international education (American Council on Education, 2003). Federal government initiatives have also been significant factors in the growth of study abroad: the availability of federal financial aid for study abroad in 1992, President Bill Clinton's executive memorandum encouraging international experience and awareness in 2000, and more recently, the formation of the Bipartisan Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program. Proposed by the late Senator Paul Simon in 2003 and passed in January 2004—a month after his death in December 2003—the commission is charged with recommending “a program to greatly expand the opportunity for students at institutions of higher education in the United States to study abroad, with special emphasis on studying in developing nations” and which “meets the growing need of the United States to become more sensitive to the cultures of other countries” (HR 2673, Section 104). In November 2005, the Commission released a report calling on the United States to send one million students abroad annually by 2016–2017 (Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005), and the United States Senate declared 2006 the “Year of Study Abroad.”

The Commission highlighted two core reasons why American undergraduates should study abroad: “global competence” and “national needs.” Specifically, the Commission pointed towards multiple factors prompting it to call for a dramatic expansion of studying abroad including: globalization and economic competitiveness, national security, U.S. leadership, active engagement in the international community, and the educational value of study abroad (pp. v–vi). Independent organizations such as NAFSA: Association of International Educators (2003), the American Council on Education (2003), and the Forum on Education Abroad have also been at the forefront of initiating efforts to increase the number of American undergraduates studying abroad.

In comparison to other areas of higher education, research on study abroad policy, programs, and student participants is relatively limited. Much of the literature is concerned with outcomes for individual students, including language acquisition, personal growth, academic outcomes, and professional development (Allen & Herron, 2003; Bacon, 2002; Freed, 1995; Jurasak, Lamson, & O'Maley, 1996; Shannon, 1995; Van Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005; Wagner & Magistrale, 1995; Whalen, 1996).<sup>3</sup> Additional studies examine the impact on students' and alumnae's

global and international perspectives (Akanke & Slawson, 2000; Douglas & Jones-Rikkens, 2001). Theoretical work on the relationship between study abroad and identity is underdeveloped. On one hand, given the practical and applied focus of the field, such emphases are understandable. However, this underdevelopment is still curious, given the explosion of scholarly interest in the humanities and social sciences in globalization, transnationalism, post-colonialism, and nation. In one of the few exceptions, Mell Bolen (2001) situates study abroad within the larger shift to a consumption-based, post-Fordist economy, and examines the implications of such shifts for study abroad as a cultural practice. Bolen's analysis underscores that research on study abroad must include efforts that move beyond the evaluation or "what works" paradigm to interrogate the fundamental assumptions that shape our pedagogical approach to the study abroad experience, and the ways in which study abroad produces identities. In this research project, I respond to Bolen's analysis through investigating how students make meaning of their national, American identity while outside of the United States—a critical, yet rarely discussed aspect of study abroad.

### **NATIONAL IDENTITY: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS**

Why nation? It may seem to be common sense (Gramsci, 1971) that research on study abroad be grounded in paradigms that privilege the "global" and "international" as key educational objectives of the study abroad experience. Yet, the recent surge of patriotism and nationalism in the United States post 9/11 should alert us that national sentiments and identity are a fundamental element of how Americans see and position themselves vis-à-vis the world (Apple, 2002). Furthermore, the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>, along with the United States' occupation of Afghanistan and then Iraq, led to intensified public interest and debate on the contours of American identity, which heightened awareness of the relationship between nation and self among students who were preparing to travel abroad.

The construct of "nation" is invested with an illusion of certainty. Yet, at the core, nations are nothing more than artificial constructs created, Arjun Appadurai argues, as "a product of the collective imagination" (1993, p. 414). As Benedict Anderson (1983) has detailed, nations were originally born through print media, which allowed individuals who were geographically dispersed to imagine themselves linked by an affective attachment to an imagined, abstract entity: the nation. Such affective ties are not natural in a biological sense, but are created and then continually nurtured through particular practices which are necessary to sustain the continuation of the nation. Eric Hobshawn (1994), for example, argues

that such “invented traditions” as the Pledge of Allegiance; the ceremonial raising, lowering, and displaying of the flag; and the ritualistic singing of the national anthem at sports events are at the core of the perpetuation of national identity.

Politicians from various nations often face contradictory impulses to maintain national borders and national identities for political purposes, and simultaneously to erode or ignore these borders when it suits a nation’s economic objectives. For example, the border between the United States and Mexico is both rigid and fluid. On one hand, U.S. border patrol agents capture dozens of Mexican citizens each night, as they attempt to cross the “no man’s land” between Mexico and Texas. Simultaneously, American corporations, such as Tyson, are accused of actively recruiting and facilitating illegal migration to fill low-paying, hazardous jobs in poultry processing plants, jobs that Americans do not want.

Increasingly, there are also forces that are beyond the control of nation-states, both rich and poor. For example, as Saskia Sassen (2001) observes, the “global cities” of New York, London, and Tokyo are situated in, but are not wholly of, their corresponding nation-states of the United States, Britain, and Japan. Thus, New York is not necessarily the quintessential “American” city, but is, in fact, the exact opposite.

Less economically advantaged states are also forced to respond to global forces and rework their ideas of national identity. Peggy Levitt’s (2001) research on the Dominican Republic exemplifies the way that states reshape their notions of citizenship to accommodate new global realities. Dominican communities are increasingly transnational and diasporic, and the economic health of the Dominican Republic depends on the movement of its citizens residing abroad. In response, the state is rethinking its idea of “citizenship” and parliamentary representation to ensure the continuation of close national ties between the state, the nation, and Dominican nationals living abroad. Many other nation-states, including Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, Portugal, and India are similarly revamping and broadening the way the “nation” is imagined to embrace people beyond the physical borders of the nation (Appadurai 1993, 1996; Levitt, 2001). Aiwaha Ong’s (1999) writing similarly documents the way that Chinese nationals deploy “flexible citizenship” to develop new spaces of attachment that defy traditional national borders. As Appadurai (1996) observes, there are increasing patterns of “sovereignty without territoriality” where the assumed connection between a geographical locale and a “people” is fractured.

The above developments, among many others, suggest that the “nation” increasingly contradicts the space of identification. For example, Martha Nussbaum (1996) advances the idea of a “cosmopolitan” identity, premised on a common human bond that exceeds and transcends the nation-state. Bruce Robbins (1998), also concerned with cosmopolitan identities, stresses the significance of local

attachments and calls for the proliferation of ties that work both above and below the level of the nation-states. Amy Gutmann (1996), critical of Nussbaum's stance, asserts that the notion of a common human bond is too abstract, and that no global polity has attempted such a project. Clearly, few people feel emotional attachment to global bodies such as the United Nations, and other global entities (such as the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the G-8) inspire solidarity only in opposition. Arjun Appadurai (1993) suggests the model of "new patriotisms" (such as the now defunct Queer Nation) that evolve from multiple, local attachments and move, octopus-like, throughout the world.

Despite the above contradictions and challenges, this destabilization of "nation" has not weakened its power to shape American identities, but has instead created a space in which the taken-for-granted assumptions about the unity, singularity, and solidity of nation and national identity are questioned. As I will discuss, American undergraduates abroad do not reject their national identity, but reshape it so that their identity becomes more flexible, malleable, and open to multiple articulations. Craig Calhoun (2002) notes the continually reforming nature of national identity when he writes:

To treat nationalism as a relic of an earlier order, a sort of irrational expression, or a kind of moral mistake is to fail to see both the continuing power of nationalism as a discursive formation and the work—sometimes positive—that nationalist solidarities continue to do in the world. As a result nationalism is not easily abandoned, even if its myths, contents, and excesses are easily debunked (p. 150).

As Calhoun (2002) suggests, the choice is not simply between a "thin" cosmopolitan identity detached from nation, and a "thick" ethnocentric identity. As I demonstrate, student encounters with nation exceed such dualistic models. Instead, students actively produce new forms of national belonging.

## **METHODOLOGY, DATA COLLECTION, AND ANALYSIS**

The research discussed in this chapter is from the second phase of an on-going research project on study abroad and social identities (Dolby, 2004, 2005). In 2000–2001, I conducted the first phase of this research where I analyzed the study abroad experiences of 26 American and 20 Australian students. The American undergraduates, from a large Midwestern university I referred to as "University of the Midwest," all studied abroad in Australia in (the U.S.) spring semester 2001. Likewise, the Australian students all studied in the United States in 2001,

though their actual periods abroad were staggered through the year. Both groups of students were interviewed before they left their home country and upon their return (see Dolby, 2004; 2005, for a complete discussion of these studies).

In this second phase of the research, American undergraduates from three large research universities in the Midwest were interviewed in 2004, after their return from studying abroad. Of the 50 students interviewed, most had studied abroad the previous semester and all had returned within the previous year. Students who participated in this second phase of the research studied in countries all over the world for a time period of one semester. Forty-eight students who participated in this research were White students and two were African American students. One of the White students was a native of Poland and a U.S. permanent resident; the rest of the participants were Americans by birth. Nationally, 83 percent of students who study abroad are White, 6.3 percent Asian American, 5.4 percent Hispanic, 3.5 percent African American, 1.2 percent multiracial, and .6 percent Native American (Institute of International Education, 2007). As this research sample is self-selected, it is not representative, though clearly White students are both the majority of students who study abroad, and the majority of my sample. Students' majors varied widely and included disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences and engineering. With few exceptions, most students studied abroad their junior year, which is also typical; nationally, 38 percent of students who study abroad are juniors. My sample included 28 women (56 percent) and 22 men (44 percent); nationally the majority of study abroad students are female (65.5 percent; Institute of International Education, 2007).

Students were interviewed in small focus groups of 3–6 students. In total, 14 focus groups were conducted during calendar year 2004.<sup>4</sup> The focus groups allowed for interaction and discussion that can differ dramatically from a conversation between a researcher and a single participant. For example, George Kamberelis and Greg Dimitriadis (2005) assert focus groups' emphasis on collective inquiry has the potential to create:

synergy among participants that often leads to the unearthing of information seldom ready-to-hand in individual memory. Focus groups also facilitate the exploration of collective memories and shared stocks of knowledge that may seem trivial and unimportant to individuals but come to the fore as crucial when like-minded groups begin to revel in the everyday (p. 903).

Thus, in a focus group, the process of inquiry is to some extent controlled by participants and is, in this way, an instance of collective pedagogy and meaning-making.

Focus group discussions lasted approximately 1 1/2 hours and were audiotaped, transcribed, and coded (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During the focus group,

students were asked to reflect on their study abroad experiences, what they had learned about themselves as Americans, what they had learned about the nation where they had lived, and whether/how their perspectives on the world had changed as a result of studying abroad. All of the students who participated in this phase of the research had studied abroad in 2003 or 2004, as the United States was preparing for and entering a war in Iraq. This reality dramatically shaped students' experiences outside of the United States. In some cases, the war affected their choice of destinations (e.g., several chose London because the British were "America's strongest ally"); in other instances, it cut short their study abroad experience (one student had to leave Turkey after only a few weeks), and in all cases the war was a compelling, unavoidable influence that shaped their study abroad experience. Despite the official end of the war in May 2003, the ongoing conflict and violence in Iraq continued to be a factor in students' experiences abroad throughout 2003 and 2004, and was a central issue of discussion during the focus groups.

My analysis in this essay is qualitative and interpretive (Denzin, 2000). I am interested in how students construct meaning from their experience, particularly how they negotiate national identity at a time when the definition and contours of being an American are publicly and loudly debated in the United States and abroad. As a small, qualitative study, my objective is not to form generalizable hypotheses, but to understand how the participants in this study made sense of being American abroad during troubled times. My methodological approach situates the data within a critical framework that is sociologically based and contextual. Thus, in this essay, I do not simply report and describe the data collected during this research, but use specific analytical frameworks. Lois Weis and Michelle Fine (2004) refer to this process—this "theory" of method—as compositional studies. In this approach, "analyses of public and private institutions, groups, and lives are lodged in relation to key social and economic structures" (p. xvi). I analyze how students' identities as American citizens are shaped within (not determined by) the historic and troubled times in which they find themselves.

### **NEGOTIATING "AMERICA": UNDERGRADUATES ABROAD**

For the students who participated in this research, understanding themselves as Americans was a significant component of the experience of studying abroad. Because of the current political context of the United States and its relationship to the rest of the world, students who participated in this phase of the research were acutely aware of their national identity, even before departing. This finding contrasts markedly with the earlier phase of this study (Dolby, 2004), which

examined students who studied abroad in spring semester 2001. Those students, who were interviewed initially in December 2000, had little understanding or knowledge of the United States' position in the world.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, in this phase of the study, students frequently mentioned their concerns about being an American abroad—whether in the context of worries about safety, or their ability to meet and form friendships with locals. And, of course, study abroad programs are themselves addressing concerns about being American in a post September 11<sup>th</sup> world. Most students reported that their pre-departure orientation had included instructions not to wear university sweatshirts and baseball caps in public, not to congregate in a visible manner in a large group of Americans, and not to draw attention to oneself through boisterous behavior.

Many students began to associate these behaviors with the stereotypical “bad” American and attempted to distance themselves from such conduct. For example, Rachel, who spent a semester in London, recalled:

I also found myself looking more critically at Americans who were there. Americans who came to England. Like if I was at a restaurant, and I heard Americans being loud, and just not being culturally sensitive, I would get really mad.

For some students, it became important not only to criticize Americans who were displaying “bad” behavior, but to actively try to counter the American stereotypes. Students proudly reported incidents where they were positioned as atypical Americans. Joanne, who studied in Spain, commented:

All the [Spanish] students were pretty much receptive. They were a little shocked that we didn't act like constantly drunk and really idiotic Americans like they expected, that we were actually intelligent. I think they were impressed that we actually knew Spanish.

Similarly, Ian, who spent several weeks in Turkey before being forced to leave in advance of the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003, reflected:

We met a group of Turkish students...basically all they knew about the U.S. was from movies and stuff, stereotypically negative. And so we were like the first people that they kind of liked that were from here. They had [American] exchange students from the past that they thought were annoying.

The majority of students who were interviewed stated that it was important not be seen as a typical American (i.e., to display behaviors which were considered boorish and insensitive). For example, Tim, who studied in Italy, expressed being embarrassed about typical American behavior:

Americans go into a place, and they decide this is mine, the wall's mine, the silverware is mine. So as a group of Americans wherever we would go we'd be just, yep, this is ours now. No, you can't talk to me that way. I've decided to speak English, you're going to speak English, you're going to play this type of music....It was so embarrassing.

Here, student participants reject what Craig Calhoun (2002) describes as a "thick" national identity, or one which is exclusionary and ethnocentric. However, it is also important to note that students do not adopt what Calhoun refers to as a "thin" national identity, one which is detached from any affiliation to a nation. Thus, students do not say, "I do not want to be an American"; they very clearly posit that they do not want to be "that type" of American, or the bad or "ugly" American (Lederer & Burdick, 1958/1999). Students are not rejecting their national identity or affiliation, but seeing it as something that is flexible, open to re-articulation, and perhaps even improvement.

Though most students rejected the personae of the bad or "ugly" American, there were a few exceptions. One student, Alan, who studied abroad in Amsterdam, conceded that he actively embraced behavior that the other students considered inappropriate. He related this story of his experience buying tickets for the Paris Metro:

None of us spoke French. It was funny because my friend went up there and the only thing we knew was like "bonjour." So he goes up there and he says, "Bonjour. Hi there." The lady looked at us and she started to speak the little bit of English that she could and then as we tried to like, not be as grateful to her, then she stopped and pretended not to speak any English at all, and just wouldn't help us.

Alan admits that he and his friends were, in his words, "messing around." While Alan is unapologetic about his behavior, he also does not display the arrogance that I often witnessed in the earlier phase of this research. Alan does not see a need to be penitent for his rudeness, and he is also aware that others may not approve. He is able to understand—if not wholly accept—the perspective of the ticket agent at the Paris Metro station.

## **THE U.S. AT WAR: COMPLICATING NATIONAL IDENTITY**

Being abroad during wartime presented another layer of challenges for these American students. Few, if any, students found themselves in nations where the general population supported the United States' actions in Iraq. While some

students (e.g., those in Britain and Spain) were technically studying abroad in nations that were allies, there was often a considerable gap between government policy and public opinion. Thus, almost all of the students faced difficult questions about their support of or opposition to the war.

Few students felt that the correct approach to this dilemma was to assert unquestioned American superiority or wholehearted support for the war. Some, like Debbie who studied in Italy, clearly tried to separate themselves from the actions of the U.S. government:

A lot of people that I talked to, they didn't like the American government. And they were like, "How do you feel about this and why did you go into the war?" And it's months later but they're like, "Why'd you guys do this?" I'm like, I didn't go there.

Sam, who also studied in Italy, also encountered this challenge early in his stay:

One of the first things that happened when I got there is my French roommate, we—in broken English—got into discussing about Bush, and I was like, eh, I don't agree with everything my country does, and he was like, okay, and sort of just ended the conversation. Because I didn't want to be arguing about that, at least not when you first meet someone. Later in the year we had full-blown discussions for hours on end about the United States and what it does, and often it was me against five or six other people. But sometimes people, they'd help me out, and sometimes I'd have to admit that we were wrong. I don't know, it was nice to hear what other people thought about things.

Students realized that their national identity, in this context, was necessarily adaptable, as they negotiate a middle path between Calhoun's "thin" and "thick" national identities. They found a way to hold on to their sense of a national identity and an affinity for people and place, but at the same time make room for others' opinions and perspectives. Students actively constructed and strove to personify this "good" American, who is respectful of other cultures and people, open-minded, and willing to be critical of the United States' role in the world. Yet, students did not actively articulate the idea of global or international citizenship as they tried to understand how to behave as an American in a situation where they were guests in someone else's nation. Thus, for example, Martha Nussbaum's (1996) idea of a "cosmopolitan" citizenship or identity would not have particular resonance for the students who participated in this research study. Instead, students were invested in understanding their identity within a national (in this case, United States) paradigm, but one which is more reflective and self-conscious, and moves

away from the narrow, ethnocentric, exclusive ideas of nation that are commonly associated with the United States (Jack, 2002).

### **NATIONAL IDENTITY AND STUDY ABROAD: PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

Despite the rhetoric of study abroad providing a “global experience,” the students who participated in this research were predominantly concerned with negotiating their national (American) identities. Certainly, these students were abroad at a relatively unique moment in U.S. history, as the U.S. prepared for and started a war that was largely unpopular throughout the world. Clearly, students’ national identity would be of immediate concern to them in this context.

However, I argue that the relevance of national identity as a paradigm for understanding the study abroad experience extends beyond this one, perhaps isolated, moment. My previous research (Dolby, 2004) indicates that even before September 11th, students’ experiences studying abroad were largely structured through what I have termed an “encounter” with their American self. The students in the current phase of this study did not “encounter” their national identity in the same way that the earlier group did, as they already had heightened awareness of what it meant to be an American in the post September 11th era. Furthermore, my earlier research study with Australian students who studied abroad in the United States (Dolby, 2005) indicates that Australian students do not focus on their national identity while abroad: they are, in contrast, more likely to display the global, or what I term “networked” (Castells, 2000), outlook that American study abroad programs strive to instill.

While global perspectives are certainly a worthy goal of study abroad programs, it appears that at least some American students are more concerned with understanding the role of the United States in the world than attempting to achieve the nebulous and diffuse stage of “global awareness.” While global awareness is vague, contested, and perhaps can only be achieved through multiple, extended sojourns abroad, the goal of critical reflection on U.S. national identity is considerably more achievable.<sup>6</sup>

When students return from studying abroad, many are clearly able to articulate aspects of their role in the world as American citizens, something they could not easily identify before. The courses in political science may teach students the theories of empire, yet it was the experience of constantly being questioned and probed about American foreign policy while abroad that had a more lasting impact on students. Students returned with insights that were largely unavailable to them from their vantage point inside the United States (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Thus, they began to ask critical questions about their relationship to nation, the

value and place of patriotism, and the geopolitical realities of the world. In arguing for the continuing relevance of the focus on internationalization in study abroad programs, Lester McCabe highlights the benefits of this approach, in contrast to the more recent emphasis on globalization:

I believe that internationalization will always be secure in its position as a process that serves as a cornerstone and initial building block that allows people to develop skills and tools that will become necessary for surviving in a globalized world. Such skills might include language proficiency, cross-cultural understanding, and an awareness of one's own ethnocentric tendencies (p. 142).

The research discussed in this essay underscores the continued importance of these skills, which McCabe categorizes as “internationalization” (see also Knight, 2004). Specifically, in the U.S. environment, I argue that it is particularly important that students' American national identity be examined and explored in the context of education abroad. While language proficiency and cross-cultural understanding are both important, an emphasis on only those two aspects of internationalization can easily overlook the geopolitical realities of the world—leaving students with an appreciation for other cultures, but little understanding of how those cultures and nations are related within what Immanuel Wallerstein (2004) refers to as a world-system.

The students who participated in this study abroad research study reflected on and questioned their national identity. However, their exploration would have been richer, and ultimately more beneficial, if structured, academic re-entry programs engaged with the complicated issues of nation, power, and identity that arise for American undergraduates abroad. Such an approach may be a first step toward preparing students for the conflicted terrain that will provide the framework for their lives as national, international, and global citizens.

## Endnotes

1. For example, Harvard University now expects that students will spend time abroad. See Polsky (2004).
2. See [http://www.northwestern.edu/study\\_abroad](http://www.northwestern.edu/study_abroad) and [http://www.usg.edu/oie/study\\_abroad](http://www.usg.edu/oie/study_abroad).
3. For current research on study abroad in the United States, see *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal on Study Abroad* (<http://www.frontiersjournal.com>).
4. Thirteen focus groups were conducted at three different Big Ten universities in the Midwest. One (two-person) focus group was conducted at a regional, research extensive university.
5. For example, students who traveled abroad in January 2001 attended a mandatory pre-departure orientation in November 2000. As is customary during such pre-departure

orientations, students who are nationals of the destination country (in this case, Australia) attended the orientation in order to give the outgoing Americans a sense of Australian culture. In this case, an Australian woman flatly stated that, "Australians hate Americans." This comment produced a flurry of concern among the outgoing Americans, almost all of whom raised it during the pre-departure interview as something that they were worried about and did not understand. In the second phase of the study in 2003 and 2004, outgoing American students were clearly well-aware of anti-American sentiment in Australia and elsewhere.

6. The concept of "global awareness" is contested. For example, see the contrasting perspectives of Nussbaum (1996), Robbins (1998), and Gutmann (1996).
7. One example of such a course in the United States is "Cultural Difference and Social Change" at the University of Notre Dame. While restricted to students who studied in developing countries, the course provides students with an academic setting in which to explore issues of national and global relations, identities, and power (see also Downey, 2005). In the United States, Duke University, Northwestern University, and Carleton College, among others, offer courses for students who have returned from study abroad.

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