



3rd Annual

# International Symposium

Beloit College • November 10, 2004

Symposium organized by George Lisensky, Chemistry Department,  
with special thanks to Dianna Kile.

Cover design by Shoshana Ellis,  
Student Graphic Artist, Office of Public Affairs.

**SESSION I: WOOD ROOM, MAYER HALL**

Moderator: Kathleen Mandell, Department of Chemistry

9:00	Kathleen Mandell	Opening remarks
9:05	Rachel Harvieux	Images of Chile Manifested in Poetry
9:30	Amanda Mehl	<i>Todos Salen Bailando</i> : Public Health in Quito, Ecuador
9:55	Miles Van Reed	Welcome to the Driest Place on Earth (Chile)
10:20	Break	

Moderator: Beth Dougherty, Department of Political Science

10:35	Beth Dougherty	Opening remarks
10:40	Gabe Strader-Brown	Digging Up the Past in Chile
11:05	Meghan Melloy	Strength in Community: Stories from Nicaragua and El Salvador
11:30	Kyle Kupres	Huatacondo: The Personality of a Village (Chile)
11:55	Break	

Moderator: Margaret Rennerfeldt, Department of Theatre Arts (Dance)

1:30	Margaret Rennerfeldt	Opening remarks
1:35	Harmony Chaikin and Grace Hall	Painting a Connection: A Cross-Cultural Study Between Beloit and Tucuman, Argentina
2:00	Silvia Karenina Loayza	U. S. Drug Policy in Bolivia: Success or Failure?
2:25	Matthew Flynn	Chilean Dictators: The Rise and Fall of Augusto Pinochet
2:50	Break	

Symposium participants, sponsors, moderators and guests are invited by the Dean of the College to attend a reception in their honor, 3:15-4:00, Weeks Lounge, Pearsons Hall.

**SESSION II: RICHARDSON AUDITORIUM, MORSE-INGERSOLL HALL**

Moderator: Charles Westerberg, Department of Sociology

9:00	Charles Westerberg	Opening remarks
9:05	Dylan Mulrooney-Jones	The Structural Origins of Culture: East Germany as a Community of Caring People
9:30	Jacob Horger	Polymers, Noodles, and Einstein: Summer Research in Germany
9:55	Erin Carney	Brick by Brick: Reconstruction of the Frauenkirche (Germany)
10:20	Break	

Moderator: Shawn Gillen, Department of English

10:35	Shawn Gillen	Opening remarks
10:40	Elena Ilina	Terrorism and Russian Domestic Policy
11:05	Aniko Nagy	The Mystery of Extraterrestrials (Hungary)
11:30	Brandon Strawn and Sam Gaty	Documentary Film Presentation – 2004 London International Dragon's Lair Jousting Tournament
11:55	Break	

Moderator: Donna Oliver, Department of Modern Languages and Literature

1:30	Donna Oliver	Opening remarks
1:35	Jennifer Roberta Korty	Exploring the Rainbow: Gay Political and Cultural Life in Ireland
2:00	Glenda Reed and Katrina Sterba	Two Beloit students, one venture grant, 500 miles walking across Spain
2:25	Steve Harrison	A Cultural Exploration of Huntington's Disease in Ireland
2:50	Break	

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**SESSION III: NORTH LOUNGE, WORLD AFFAIRS CENTER**

Moderator: Nancy Krusko, Department of Anthropology

9:00	Nancy Krusko	Opening remarks
9:05	Lauren Birge	Casa Ayuda: An Experience in Social Inequality in Mexico
9:30	Eva Crawford	Mexico's Indigenous Community and its Relationship with the Western World Through Photography
9:55	Elizabeth Paxton	Trading Sex and Love: The Bartering Relationships Between Sex Workers and the Non-Profits that Serve Them (Costa Rica)
10:20	Break	

Moderator: Brett Woods, Department of Biology

10:35	Brett Woods	Opening remarks
10:40	Roserain Mayberry	Santeria and the Retention of African Folklore and Religion in Cuba
11:05	Sadie Harmon	Focused and Unfocused
11:30	Rebecca Schaeffer	India and New Zealand: Holy Cow Dines With Lord of the Rings
11:55	Break	

Moderator: Glenn Appleby, Department of Mathematics

1:30	Glenn Appleby	Opening remarks
1:35	Amanda Drennan	The Archaeology of Scotland from the Perspective of a Biochemistry Major
2:00	Kristin Block, Katie Loughney and Sarah Lyon-Hill	Innocents Abroad (France)
2:50	Break	

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**SESSION IV: LOGAN ROOM, WRIGHT ART CENTER**

Moderator: Georgia Duerst-Lahti, Department of Political Science

9:00	Georgia Duerst-Lahti	Opening remarks
9:05	Kristina Wang	Japanese Elections (and How They're Different)
9:30	Erika Hayashi	Hiroshima and Nagasaki: What Americans and Japanese Know
9:55	Lee Delegard	Steel Making Using the Traditional Japanese Tatara
10:20	Break	

Moderator: Bob Elder, Department of Economics

10:35	Bob Elder	Opening remarks
10:40	Matt Goodman	Lessons from History: Vietnam to Iraq
11:05	Philip Mangis	<i>Shadow on The Mun</i> : The Story of a Disastrous Development Project in Northeast Thailand
11:30	Kavanah Zoe Ramsier	The Little Matchbox Girl: A Story of Comfort and Collection in India
11:55	Break	

Moderator: Marion Fass, Department of Biology

1:30	Marion Fass	Opening remarks
1:35	Anne Koplinka-Loehr	<i>Tubaab bi degg na Wolof!</i> The white person speaks Wolof! (Senegal)
2:00	Sasha Wright and Annie Hostetter	Presenting Shani Omary: A Tanzanian Woman
2:25	Leah Raffanti	Gigs, Money, and Organization: Issues facing a Ghanaian dance company in Accra, Ghana
2:50	Andee Vaughan	The Hypocrisy Of a Global Sisterhood (Morocco)
3:15	Break	

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**Lauren Birge '07**

Denver, Colorado

Major: Sociology

Sponsor: Carey Pieratt-Seeley

### **Casa Ayuda: An Experience in Social Inequality in Mexico**

**M**y presentation will investigate how corruption and unequal income distribution affect the provision of social services for the poor in Mexico. The example I chose was an orphanage located in central Mexico.

Funded by a Venture Grant received from Beloit, I spent a month at an orphanage, Casa Ayuda, in the central highlands of Mexico teaching English, working on construction projects, and living with the orphans. Casa Ayuda is situated on the outskirts of the town of San Miguel de Allende in the state of Guanajuato and has been a working orphanage for many years. In addition to providing food and shelter for orphans, Casa Ayuda also provides food, education and other assistance to the surrounding San Felipe neighborhood.

Although the city of San Miguel has seen a significant amount of economic development funded by American tourists and the American movie industry, the orphans and the surrounding neighborhood have seen little benefit. This seems to be caused by several factors which are specific to Mexican culture and government including issues such as corruption, unequal income distribution and bias towards non-Catholic organizations.

Over the past five years, there has been an exponential growth of investment in the town of San Miguel, but the economic benefit has been limited to the wealthy and the limited middle class. Very little of this money has trickled down to the people living in the neighborhood, or to the orphanage itself. Most residents of the neighborhood live well below the poverty line and suffer from chronic underemployment.

The government of Mexico and its social welfare system seem to keep the orphans and the neighborhood in a condition of permanent poverty. The government agency, El Desarrollo Integral de la Familia, is plagued by biases against non-Catholic institutions and questionable practices.

The presentation will cover these social problems and potential solutions.

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**Kristin Block '06**

Deforest, Wisconsin

**(with Katie Loughney and Sarah Lyon-Hill)**

Major: Biology, French

Sponsors: Ken Yasukawa, Brock Spencer, Carl Mendelson

### **Innocents Abroad**

**I**n this time of political angst, obesity, and cultural ignorance, we sought respite by spending a semester in France only to encounter these very same issues. Americans tend to see the French as skinny, apathetic smokers, but in reality, this is an unfair characterization. The French are a lively and passionate people who love debating such topics as politics, food, and history. The people of Brittany, in particular, take a special pride in their distinct cultural heritage. Over the five months we spent in Rennes, France, and during our transition from tourists to displaced Americans, we became more familiar with the country's political mindset as well as its gastronomic culture. Living between two countries put us in a position to observe the qualities that make France French, all the while comparing them to the views, problems, and traits we commonly deem to be uniquely American. Reflecting on our own American culture and upbringings, we will discuss the three aspects of politics, history, and the wonderful world of food.

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**Erin Carney '05**

Hazelhurst, Wisconsin

Major: International Relations, Modern Languages

Minor: Asian Studies

Sponsor: John Rapp

### **Brick by Brick: Reconstruction of the Frauenkirche**

**T**he Frauenkirche (Church of our Lady) towered over the Dresden skyline for over two hundred years. The Protestant church was built in the Baroque style, rivaling architecture in Rome and helped to enhance Dresden as the cultural capital of the Kingdom of Saxony.

The Frauenkirche remained a symbol of Dresden culture until the end of World War Two when after two days of firebombing by the Americans and British the church collapsed due to the heat of the fires surrounding it.

Due to the lack of funds and interest in reconstruction of the Frauenkirche in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and also as a memorial for the destruction of the city, the church was kept in ruins. Nevertheless, a few people found some of the more important stone blocks among the rubble and numbered them so they could eventually be used in any future reconstruction.

It wasn't until the reunification of Germany in 1990 that discussion about rebuilding began in earnest. With help from IBM, a program was created to virtually reconstruct the church, using as many of the original stones from the church as possible. Experts eventually deemed 30% of the original building reusable. The rest of the stone in the reconstructed church would be gathered from the nearby sandstone quarry used to build the original church over 200 years earlier. Actual reconstruction of the church began in 1993, with plans to complete work before Dresden's 800th birthday in 2006.

In my symposium I intend to discuss the history and worldwide effort that has been put into rebuilding the Frauenkirche and the old city, as well as the changes I saw during my three visits to Dresden from 2000 to 2004.

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### **Harmony Chaikin '07**

Clarkdale, Arizona

**(with Grace Hall)**

Major: Spanish, Sociology

Sponsor: Sylvia Lopez

### **Painting a Connection: A Cross-Cultural Study Between Beloit and Tucuman, Argentina**

**D**uring our first year at Beloit, we noticed a social boundary (a.k.a. the Beloit "bubble") between the Beloit community and the College. In hopes of bursting this bubble, we completed a cross-cultural study with children from the Beloit Merrill Community Center and children attending the Instituto Mixto de Enseñanza Privada, a school in Tucuman, Argentina. With the children, we explored the idea that many cultures are fundamentally similar, that time, body language, eye contact, education, ethnicity, physical geography, music, family, food and recreational activities affect individuals living within any given culture. We communicated these ideas through discussion, the writing of letters and the painting of portable murals all of which were exchanged between the students. We hoped to bring awareness to both Argentinean and North American students through the exchanging of these projects. Thanks to the Beloit College First Year Initiative Venture Grant and Beloit Rotary Club we were able to complete this project over the last six months. Come see these murals, letters, pictures, and even a little of the discussion!

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### **Eva Crawford '07**

Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Major: Undecided

Sponsor: Olga Ogurtsova and Carey Pieratt-Seeley

### **Mexico's Indigenous Community and its Relationship with the Western World Through Photography**

**I**n the history of Mexican photography, never before has the indigenous population taken any commanding part; instead, it has lived the past century as the silent subject of innumerable photographs taken and funded by western artists, and has never before had the opportunity or the means to create the opportunity to bring the art of photography into its own community.

In San Cristobal, Chiapas, in the highlands of southern Mexico, there is an ever-growing group of artists working to change this inequality and to claim photography for the indigenous population. The organization is known as the Chiapas Photography Project, and funds two smaller groups: the Indigenous Photography Archive and Lokitamayach. The Archive was started by a Mexican-American nun and, along with Lokitamayach (the gallery space) is run by a core group of six indigenous persons and over 200 affiliated indigenous photographers.

With the formation of the Chiapas Photography Project, the indigenous population is able to begin to reclaim their culture from its vulnerable state as a mute subject of scrutiny by the western world and allow it to become fortified with the reality of their true culture.

My time in San Cristobal was spent primarily at the Archive and taking my own photographs. Through the balance of these two experiences I learned a great deal about the politics of photographing foreign cultures. My presentation will focus around the entrenched hierarchy between indigenous and western peoples and how this balance of power plays out in the act of photographing.

This project was sponsored by a Beloit College Venture Grant.

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**Lee Delegard '07**

Edina, Minnesota

Major: Studio Art

Sponsor: Olga Ogurtsova

**Steel Making Using the Traditional Japanese Tataka**

I wish I could say that I went to Japan to study this method of steel making, however, I was involved in a workshop at the University of Minnesota, in which we made our own Tataka. The Tataka method of steel making involves the construction of a large furnace, into which is fed charcoal and iron ore. The unique construction of the furnace allows the ore to form steel of varying qualities and carbon content.

The highest quality of steel produced by this method is called Tamagane. Although steel of less quality can be much more easily produced through modern industrial methods, Tamagane steel, exclusively used for Japanese swords can only be produced through the use of the Tataka.

This project was sponsored by a Beloit College Venture Grant.

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**Amanda Drennan '05**

Franklin Park, Illinois

Major: Biochemistry

Sponsor: Paul Stanley

**The Archaeology of Scotland from the Perspective of a Biochemistry Major**

Although a biochemistry major, I took advantage of my semester abroad to become familiar with the archaeology of Scotland. In this presentation I highlight the Orkney Islands in the north of Scotland. This is one of the few places where modern humans are allowed to wander freely amongst ancient ruins; yet despite this potentially destructive privilege there exists a wealth of well-preserved artifacts. Two 5,000 year-old Neolithic villages exist, one of which, Skara Brae, is completely preserved with beds, dressers, and chairs. Stark geologic formations, such as the Old Man of Hoy and the Cliffs of Yesnaby, hold myths that the villagers tell even today. Carved Viking graffiti decorates a Neolithic grave. The Stones of Stromness and Ring of Brodgar are precise formations of standing stones where visitors can walk in a pastoral setting amongst sheep. I will discuss these sites and their significance in the history and culture of the Orkney Islands.

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**Matthew Flynn '06**

Ridgefield, Connecticut

Major: Anthropology

Sponsor: Dan Shea

**Chilean Dictators: The Rise and Fall of Augusto Pinochet**

With every dictator there is always conflict surrounding their rise to power, use of power, and eventual deposition. Augusto Pinochet was a dictator, but one who ostensibly willingly stepped down from his office. Before Pinochet rose to power Chile's economy was failing, but over the period of his dictatorship he turned the country's economy around. Were Pinochet's methods worth the outcome? While the country may be economically safe, several incidents and disappearances are rumored to be linked to Pinochet, or those directly under his command. This presentation aims to weigh the pros and cons of Augusto Pinochet's rule in Chile, and inform individuals to a degree that they can create their own opinions about one of South America's better known, recent dictators.

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**Sam Gaty '06**

Salem, Oregon

**(with Brandon Strawn)**

Major: Undecided

Sponsor: Olga Ogurtsova

**Documentary Film Presentation – 2004 London International Dragon's Lair Jousting Tournament**

We will be presenting a documentary video as the culmination of our Venture Grant in creative documentary film-making. The video captures our experience surrounding the 2004 London International Dragon's Lair Jousting Tournament – the largest full-contact heavy armor jousting tournament in the world. While experimenting with passive subjective video journalism, we explored the culture of modern jousting and the people that bring it to life by putting their lives on the line. Questions will be answered at the end of the presentation. The video will eventually be available on the College website for further viewing.

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**Matt Goodman '05**

Woodinville, Washington

Major: History

Minor: Political Science, Asian Studies

Sponsor: Bob Hodge

**Lessons from History: Vietnam to Iraq**

The famous Spanish-American philosopher, George Santayana, once said, "Those who refuse to learn from history are condemned to repeat it." I never understood just how true this statement was until I found myself discussing the War in Iraq in the jungles of Vietnam. It was the irony of the circumstances that struck me, standing amidst the most disastrous American led war of the last century talking about what could become the first disastrous war of the new century.

From the very start of the War in Iraq, people have been drawing comparisons to the American War in Vietnam. These early comparisons were disregarded or discredited by many people. Unfortunately, now the similarities are irrefutable. Most disconcerting is that many of the same mistakes are reoccurring.

There will be two primary questions discussed. What lessons from Vietnam have been ignored in Iraq? And how can we keep Iraq from becoming another "Vietnam?" Many of the lessons that should have been learned will come from the book, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons from Vietnam* by Robert McNamara, who served as the Secretary of Defense from 1961-1968.

The greatest failure of the last century was our inability to learn from our past failures. And yet, in this new century, as with the old, we continue to make the same mistake over and over again. The 20th century was the bloodiest in human history because we failed to learn from history. If our hope is to make this century better than the last we must start listening.

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**Grace Hall '07**

Snoqualmie, Washington

**(with Harmony Chaikin)**

Major: International Relations, Modern Languages

Sponsor: Sylvia Lopez

**Painting a Connection: A Cross-Cultural Study Between Beloit and Tucuman, Argentina**

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Privada, a school in Tucuman, Argentina. With the children, we explored the idea that many cultures are fundamentally similar, that time, body language, eye contact, education, ethnicity, physical geography, music, family, food and recreational activities affect individuals living within any given culture. We communicated these ideas through discussion, the writing of letters and the painting of portable murals all of which were exchanged between the students. We hoped to bring awareness to both Argentinean and North American students through the exchanging of these projects. Thanks to the Beloit College First Year Initiative Venture Grant and Beloit Rotary Club we were able to complete this project over the last six months. Come see these murals, letters, pictures, and even a little of the discussion!

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**Sadie Harmon '05**

New Richmond, Wisconsin

Major: Studio Art

Minor: Museum Studies

Sponsor: George Williams, Jr.

**Focused and Unfocused**

As students at a small liberal art school, attendees to Beloit College receive a unique education in a very specific environment. After being off campus for a semester, however, I believe that it is important to realistically address the benefits and drawbacks of attending a college such as Beloit. Last fall, I participated in the Associated Colleges of the Midwest Chicago Arts Program, and focused on a purely fine arts curriculum. The experience of being a student in a greatly different atmosphere and climate was one that continues to inform my perspective on my studies at Beloit. Studying only art, as well as participating in two art internships and setting up an independent project, allowed me to both gain and lose perspective on both art and learning as a whole. In this symposium, I would like to address the distinction between studying art at a liberal arts college such as Beloit and studying art in a narrowly focused environment such as I did last fall.

It is the peculiar dissimilarities between the focused and the unfocused that I would like to address, through the lens of being an art student. How did being immersed in the "Chicago Art World" inform my work, and, conversely, how does being separated from that same art world affect me? How are art and artists treated differently in a liberal arts college and an arts program? What can a liberal arts college provide that an art school can't, and vice versa? These are all questions that I hope to address, based on my experience at both Beloit and at the Chicago Arts Program.

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**Steve Harrison '07**

Deerfield, Illinois

Major: Cellular and Molecular Biology

Minor: Journalism

Sponsor: Olga Ogurtsova

**A Cultural Exploration of Huntington's Disease in Ireland**

When I was in seventh grade I learned my family secret: Huntington's disease (HD) is rampant in my bloodline. My father, his two brothers, and my grandfather are/were all afflicted with the disease, and there is a 50 percent chance for both my brother and me that we will develop the disease in our lifetime.

HD is a degenerative brain disorder for which there is no effective treatment or cure. The disease slowly diminishes the affected individual's ability to walk, think, talk and reason. Afflicted individuals suffer from memory loss and involuntary body shaking. Eventually, a person with HD becomes totally dependent upon others for his or her care, and will often die due to swallowing complications.

HD also profoundly affects the lives of entire families: emotionally, socially, and economically. Dealing with Huntington's has caused slews of bankruptcies, divorces, estrangements from children, and suicides. I have seen the effect of the disease on my family and spoken with members of the Huntington's Disease Society of America (HDSA), but I knew there was knowledge to be gained abroad.

I hypothesized that the disease might be dealt with differently in a different culture, even one that may not seem much different from our own. The Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland (HDAI) offered me a chance to test my theory. During a three week period this summer, I interviewed an HD researcher at the Royal Surgeon's College in Dublin, saw a seminar on unifying HD research within the EU, and spent time with a group of HD patients for a weekend retreat, courtesy of the HDAI.

I learned more than I anticipated. Catholic influence, political instability, universal healthcare, pub culture, security paranoia, American drug companies, and the Irish lifestyle all synthesized a whole new look at the world of Huntington's disease.

This project was sponsored by a Beloit College Venture Grant.

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**Rachel Harvieux '06**

Stillwater, Minnesota

Major: Anthropology

Sponsor: Dan Shea

**Images of Chile Manifested in Poetry**

How does a foreign landscape, language, and culture influence the creation of poetry? From Iquique, a city on the Pacific coast of over 200,000 people, to Huatacondo, a tiny desert town isolated in the Atacama, my first experience abroad heightened my senses and creativity. Many poems resulted from this summer of living, working, and traveling in Chile.

This presentation will be an exploration of how real life events inspire poems and how they are transferred to the page. See the images that inspired stanzas. Hear the stories and events that became themes. We will start with the poems and work backwards to their sources rooted in the Chilean culture and landscape. From the incorporation of the Spanish language to a sense of history stimulated by archaeological excavation, this is a chance to see where the creation of poetry meets ocean, desert, and the Pan-American Highway.

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**Erika Hayashi '07**

Tokyo, Japan

Major: Undeclared

Sponsor: John Rapp

**Hiroshima and Nagasaki:  
What Americans and Japanese Know**

On August 6th and 9th, 1945, atomic bombs exploded in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A lot of people know about this event. However, how deeply do they really understand what happened? What is the difference in knowledge between Americans and Japanese about the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki? What beliefs do they share? What are the hidden truths neither of them know? I have posed several questions about this event to American and Japanese students in Beloit and researched how this event is treated differently in America and Japan. Also, I will describe my visits to the peace memorial museum and Peace Park in Hiroshima, and to the atomic bomb museum and Peace Park in Nagasaki during the past summer, where I found truths that I did not know before I went there. In my presentation, I want to share information about different attitudes in the U.S. and Japan about the dropping of the atomic bombs and its aftermath in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, including what I discovered in my own field research.

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**Jacob Horger '05**

Morrison, Colorado

Major: Chemistry

Minor: Physics

Sponsor: George Lisensky

**Polymers, Noodles, and Einstein:  
Summer Research in Germany**

In summer 2004, I participated in a pilot internship program sponsored by the Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker in Ulm, Germany, the city of Einstein's birth. This program was intended to give students the experience of living and working in a different cultural environment, and the possibility of gaining confidence in their own practical, theoretical, and language skills. Both the University and the surrounding city are far from Beloit in size and ambiance. Language, laboratory procedures, and instrument access were quite different from my previous experiences in science classes. Notwithstanding my lack of language skills, the program was a fantastic opportunity, both to do chemistry and to learn that noodles and colleges are cross-cultural.

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**Annie Hostetter '05  
(with Sasha Wright)**

Indianapolis, Indiana

Major: Environmental Policy

Minor: African Studies

Sponsor: Robin Greenler and John Greenler

**Presenting Shani Omary:  
A Tanzanian Woman**

We spent our Fall 2003 semester abroad in Tanzania on the ACM Tanzania program. The program focuses intensely on academic excellence and fieldwork in biology and anthropology. We became very familiar with little nooks of Tanzanian culture, including the University of Dar es Salaam and the Masaai community surrounding the Endulen area of northern Tanzania.

The nature of male/female interactions in Tanzania as well as the structure of the ACM program (moving around the country quite often) meant that we often met a small demographic of Tanzanian peoples, usually extremely outgoing Tanzanian men. However, the friendship that we developed with a young woman named Shani Omary was unique both in its existence as well as in its extraordinary emotional and demonstrative capacity. We would like to use this opportunity to introduce you to Shani and to share with you the colorful and uninhibited Tanzania that we saw while by her side.

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**Elena Ilina '06**

Moscow, Russia

Major: Political Science

Sponsor: Olga Ogurtsova

**Terrorism and Russian Domestic Policy**

Has the world changed since 9/11? I think the answer is yes. These days the world lives under the threat of a terrorist attack, which can happen any day and cause hundreds of deaths of innocent people. For Russia the potential for a terrorist attack has become an everyday reality, and terrorist acts related to the war in Chechnya has led to government crisis.

Observers have already called the political reforms proposed by President Putin in September 2004 revolutionary. Some politicians claim that these reforms will require changes to the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Others argue that all the proposed changes remain within the framework of the Constitution.

There are several proposals by President Putin that call for the concentration of powers and executive control over the political system. Among those proposals are:

- appointment of the 89 regional leaders by the president and no longer by local elections;
- changing the electoral system from the mixed system to a fully proportional system at the national level, which means that only strong political parties that have close ties with the Kremlin administration would have access to power.

The question is whether these reforms can really help to prevent terrorism or whether they are just a new way for the political elite, and in particular for President Putin, to gain power. How could ordinary citizens' interests be represented under such a centralized system?

Now Russian people face challenging times: the more terrorist attacks there are, the less popular democracy and liberal ideas are in Russia. But will limits on democracy really help prevent more terrorist attacks?

I would like to discuss why such reforms are criticized by European and American society, and at the same time accepted by ordinary Russian citizens.

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**Anne Koplinka-Loehr '06**

Ithaca, New York

Major: African Studies

Sponsor: Ann Davies

*Tubaab bi degg na Wolof!*  
**(The white person speaks Wolof!)**

**A**fter spending nearly six months in Dakar, the capital of Senegal in West Africa, I can say that I am part Senegalese—or at least I can walk, talk, and dress the part as well as any *tubaab*. Not only did I fall in love with the country and the people, but above all the language and culture fascinated me, drawing me in until I felt like I belonged.

Because I arrived speaking fairly fluent European French, I was able to get around quite well, and communicate with most people in Dakar—leaving me a semester to perfect my Wolof, the main African language spoken in Senegal.

As I began to absorb this new language through classes and everyday interactions, I came across new expressions and proverbs that helped me to better understand it, as well as the social and cultural context in which it was situated. Key Wolof phrases such as *Sénégal: Le pays de la taranga* (Senegal: the country of hospitality), *Nit nitay garabam* (A person is a person's remedy), *Yallah baax na* (God is great), and *Kaay, nu chine* (Come, let's make tea), acted as a window through which I saw Senegalese culture and became familiar with Senegalese values.

Going through these expressions makes me think of the stories they bring up, the people who have said them to me, and the deep connections I have left behind. Not only is this presentation a linguistic and cultural exploration of Senegal, but a set of vignettes of my personal journey there as well.

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**Jennifer Roberta Korty '05**

Wheaton, Illinois

Major: Political Science

Sponsor: Georgia Duerst-Lahti

**Exploring the Rainbow:  
Gay Political and Cultural Life in Ireland**

**I**reland is a nation hurtling through cultural and political changes. A decade ago, homosexuality was still illegal in this predominately Catholic country. Now, there are thriving gay communities in all the major cities across the Isle. The Irish ten percent are busting out of the closet, albeit with some growing pains.

In my symposium, I will present a contemporary snapshot of gay life in Ireland, developing a picture of

where gay culture has grown from, where it currently is, and where it is heading.

Particular focus will fall on the current legal and political status of homosexuals and the influence of the European Union on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender issues. Additionally, I will share my own experiences as an out woman in Ireland. My observations will be combined with personal statements written by homosexual Irish college students. Together they offer unique and intimate revelations of gay cultural life in Ireland (and, quite possibly, the United States).

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**Kyle Kupres '07**

Lake Mills, Wisconsin

Major: Geology, Anthropology

Sponsor: Dan Shea

**Huatacondo: The Personality of a Village**

**O**ver the summer I had the opportunity to spend a month living in a small village at the edge of the Atacama desert, in the foothills of the Chilean Andes. During this time I became acquainted with some of the people living in the village as well as their individual ways of life.

The village of Huatacondo is based upon an economic system that is foreign to many of us who come from areas where a grocery store is within a short drive, or even walking distance. The concept of the word "career" to a person living in Huatacondo might consist of odd chores and favors to neighbors, raising chickens to sell the eggs, or producing bread to sell amongst the villagers.

The presentation will consist of a slide show and stories that illustrate life in the village of Huatacondo. I will focus on topics such as economy, climate, education, and religion.

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**Silvia Karenina Loayza '07**

La Paz, Bolivia

Major: Economics, International Relations

Sponsor: Pablo Toral

**U.S. Drug Policy in Bolivia:  
Success or Failure?**

**S**ince the 1980s the United States has declared a war against drugs. Cocaine is one of the substances included in this war. The main raw material for the production of cocaine is coca leaves. The coca plant grows in Bolivia, Peru and Colombia. The anti-drug war has included military intervention, coca eradication, payments to eliminate the crops, etc. However, the results have been far from satisfactory. Bolivia has been the country in the region that has received the most money for the fight

against drugs; for some, the results in the country are a total success and for others, a total failure. This has motivated me to find out whether the war against drugs accomplished its goals, the reasons for its success or failure, its impact on the people and the consequences for Bolivia in general.

I traveled the affected region of El Chapare in Bolivia to learn from the people directly. I visited a school to learn from the senior students, because they have lived through the war against drugs. I also talked to the region's representatives in parliament and to the foreign agencies that work on the eradication of coca crops: USAID, UNODC, EU. I complemented my study with bibliography related to the subject. The final product of this research is a web page with my findings.

My findings indicate that the anti-narcotics policies have been far from successful for many reasons, but mainly that there is a misunderstanding of cultures and values between the eradicators of coca and the planters. There is no alternative crop with the capacity to produce as much money as coca for those involved in its cultivation. Furthermore, anti-drug policies have created social, political and economic tensions that have never been resolved, making policies such as forceful eradication unviable. Cocaine production and consumption have not been reduced.

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**Katie Loughney '06** Washington, DC  
(with Kristin Block and Sarah Lyon-Hill)

Major: Geology, French  
Sponsor: Ken Yasukawa, Carl Mendelson, Brock Spencer

### **Innocents Abroad**

In this time of political angst, obesity, and cultural ignorance, we sought respite by spending a semester in France only to encounter these very same issues. Americans tend to see the French as skinny, apathetic smokers, but in reality, this is an unfair characterization. The French are a lively and passionate people who love debating such topics as politics, food, and history. The people of Brittany, in particular, take a special pride in their distinct cultural heritage. Over the five months we spent in Rennes, France, and during our transition from tourists to displaced Americans, we became more familiar with the country's political mindset as well as its gastronomic culture. Living between two countries put us in a position to observe the qualities that make France French, all the while comparing them to the views, problems, and traits we commonly deem to be uniquely American. Reflecting on our own American culture and upbringings, we will

discuss the three aspects of politics, history, and the wonderful world of food.

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**Sarah Lyon-Hill '06** Toledo, Ohio  
(with Kristin Block and Katie Loughney)

Major: International Relations, French  
Sponsor: Ken Yasukawa, Carl Mendelson, Brock Spencer

### **Innocents Abroad**

In this time of political angst, obesity, and cultural ignorance, we sought respite by spending a semester in France only to encounter these very same issues. Americans tend to see the French as skinny, apathetic smokers, but in reality, this is an unfair characterization. The French are a lively and passionate people who love debating such topics as politics, food, and history. The people of Brittany, in particular, take a special pride in their distinct cultural heritage. Over the five months we spent in Rennes, France, and during our transition from tourists to displaced Americans, we became more familiar with the country's political mindset as well as its gastronomic culture. Living between two countries put us in a position to observe the qualities that make France French, all the while comparing them to the views, problems, and traits we commonly deem to be uniquely American. Reflecting on our own American culture and upbringings, we will discuss the three aspects of politics, history, and the wonderful world of food.

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**Philip Mangis '05** Salem, Oregon

Major: Political Science  
Sponsor: Georgia Duerst-Lahti

### **Shadow on the Mun: The Story of a Disastrous Development Project in Northeast Thailand**

In the fall semester of 2003 I studied abroad in Northeastern Thailand. The focus of the program was to expose students to the dilemmas of development. We addressed questions such as, "What is progress?" and "What is development?" One particular issue we looked at was the Pak Mun Dam. This dam was funded by the World Bank and was built with the best of intentions. Unfortunately, the dam has had a disastrous impact on the local communities and it is roundly considered a failed development project. Yet to this day the Pak Mun Dam still operates and continues to contribute to the fragmentation of the once cohesive communities of northeastern Thailand.

In response to what I witnessed I helped coauthor a book with three other students and our professor. The story, titled *Shadow on the Mun*, in its simplest form recounts the disastrous collision between two worlds; one that has become dependent on dams, and another older world dependent on rivers. The first world is familiar to us; it is the world of the modern city and the urban culture that emanates from it. The second world is one where rivers embody the source of all things; daily sustenance drawn up in nets, cultures tied directly to water and land in the form of rapids, wetlands, and seasons. If you find the idea of international development intriguing, or are simply fond of Thailand, come join me as I read an excerpt from *Shadow on the Mun*.

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### **Roserain Mayberry '06**

Northwood, New Hampshire

Major: International Relations

Minor: Latin American Studies

Sponsor: Pablo Toral

#### **Santeria and the Retention of African Folklore and Religion in Cuba**

Cuba is a country that has retained much of its African history through interweaving African folklore and spirituality into modern society, making it a part of the Cuban identity. My presentation will discuss the retention of African spirituality and folklore through the religion of Santeria and look at the strong Orisha tradition that continues to be prominent across the island.

Renowned Cuban scholar and writer Fernando Ortiz defined the Cuban people as an *ajiaco*, or stew, with each ethnic group adding their own unique flavor and texture to the final product of national identity. Afro Cubans are a large ingredient in the *ajiaco*. Cuba is a country with people of all colors. Officially racism does not exist, but there is invisible racism to be found. Freedom is thought of differently in Cuba and there is a distinct sense of values and community. People feel connected and have a sense of duty to one another. These ideals have largely been influenced by African history that is still strongly represented in Cuba and is essential to understanding the "Cuban context."

I would also like to dedicate part of the presentation to sharing my experiences in an island that is shut off from the rest of the world and my endeavor to understand the Cuban reality.

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### **Amanda Mehl '06**

St. Louis, Missouri

Major: Modern Languages and Women and Gender Studies

Minor: Health Care Studies

Sponsor: Marion Fass

#### **"Todos Salen Bailando" Public Health in Quito, Ecuador**

"**T**odos Salen Bailando" (Everyone leaves dancing) is the story of what the young urban women of Ecuador and the medical staff at Centro de Salud No. 4 taught me about life, struggle, self understanding, and the spirit of community.

I conducted a small research project on the inherent nature of maternity, self knowledge of the body and sexuality, and empowerment among Ecuadorian women. This opportunity developed the life skills and motivation to continue my career aspirations in the direction of community development and public health care in developing countries.

Among the many rewarding experiences I had at the clinic were working with pregnant adolescents, learning to take blood pressure, developing a medical vocabulary in my second language, and attending the births of 25 babies.

Combining my Modern Languages and Women and Gender Studies majors and my Health Care Studies minor as well as continuing my program Global Projects in Community Development became a reality through my internship in Chimbacalle Ecuador last semester.

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### **Meghan Melloy '05**

St. Cloud, Minnesota

Major: International Relations

Minor: Latin American Studies

Sponsor: Nancy Krusko

#### **Strength in Community: Stories from Nicaragua and El Salvador**

I spent a portion of my semester abroad in El Salvador and Nicaragua where I had the opportunity to meet members of many different communities, churches and cooperatives and hear first hand accounts of repatriation, escape from massacres, formation of farming cooperatives, women's empowerment, and life during a revolution. Most of these conversations ended with a request that we share these stories in the United States where the struggles and achievements of average Central Americans are not widely known.

Thinking back to the strength and generosity it took for people to speak so candidly about some of their most difficult personal experiences, I realized that a symposium

would provide the perfect opportunity to share these stories. I will present accounts from three communities: the Batahola Norte neighborhood in Nicaragua's capital, a farming cooperative in rural Nicaragua, and Nueva Esperanza in El Salvador. All of the communities expressed ways in which their ability to work cooperatively empowered them as individuals and as a community.

Batahola Norte was established by the Sandinista government after taking power in 1979. I interviewed women who had lived in this neighborhood since the revolution and described a sense of community and empowerment gained through work with the Sandinista party and the local community center.

The coffee growers of the UCA-Miraflor cooperative were once members of a Sandinista cooperative farm. Joint land-ownership was dissolved when the Sandinistas were voted out of power in 1990 and the cooperative now helps with export and access to loans. The families working with the cooperative emphasized the importance of property ownership to provide collateral for loans and credit, and as a source of women's empowerment.

Nueva Esperanza is a community, from the northern part of El Salvador, that fled to Nicaragua to escape government repression during the civil war. In Nicaragua they learned methods of grassroots education and cooperative farming. The experience gave them a sense of community so strong that they refused to return to El Salvador as individual families but instead became the first group to be repatriated as an entire community. Today the cooperative is an example to neighboring communities and visiting delegations.

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**Dylan Mulrooney-Jones '05** Flagstaff, Arizona

Major: Psychology, German

Sponsor: Larry White

### **The Structural Origins of Culture: East Germany as a Community of Caring People**

**O**n 3 October 1990, Helmut Kohl and West Germany officially reunified with the former Deutsche Democratic Republic (East Germany). After 45 years of separation, families were reunited, the STASI (civilian police) was no more, and people could speak freely. At least that is how the media have portrayed events. A pro-West, anti-Soviet media ignored the terrible wrongs that occur when a nation-state is dissolved almost overnight. The *Ossis* (East German citizens) went from a community of caring and interdependence to a community that still cared for each other but was forced into an alien form of competition at all costs.

In an attempt to answer the question of man's true nature, I compare the socialist-bred culture of East Germany to the capitalistic culture of today's West. The experiences of former East Germans strongly suggest that our economic and social structures do, to a great extent, determine our values, morals and attitudes toward life. This is an analysis based on my interpretations of the people I met and the things I saw while living in Erfurt, Germany, during the '03-'04 academic year. I found the generation of East Germans who grew up in the DDR to be of a different mold, with community and welfare at the forefront of their mind. These people are a product of their system, a system to which many wish they could return. All this begs the question: Who are we and what has capitalism made of us?

---

**Aniko Nagy**

Budapest, Hungary

Major: English, Swedish

Sponsor: Sonja Darlington, Andras Boros-Kazai

### **The Mystery of Extraterrestrials**

**W**hen Nobel Laureate Enrico Fermi was asked if he believed in extraterrestrials, he replied: "They are already here, they call themselves Hungarians."

Hungary lies at the heart of Central Europe, with ten million inhabitants, about the population of Michigan. In the 20th century, this tiny nation has given the Earth 12 Nobel prize winners and a legion of scientists, artists and would-be millionaires that have received worldwide recognition. The carburetor, holograph, moon rover, Basic computer programming, color television, Vitamin C, atomic bomb, Rubik's cube, full-length motion pictures: these are all notable achievements and creations of universal culture, emerging from brains born and schooled in Hungary.

How is it possible that such a small country has produced so many prominent intellectual titans? It is a question that has long been addressed in the scientific world. Diverse theories have been circulating; however, the mystery is still unsolved. In my presentation, I will consider the theory of the Hungarians deriving from outer space. Moreover, I will also provide reliable proof to account for the extraterrestrial features of the Hungarian Genius.

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**Elizabeth Paxton '05**

Phoenix, Arizona

Major: Religious Studies and Women and Gender Studies

Sponsor: Natalie Gummer

**Trading Sex and Love: The Bartering Relationships Between Sex Workers and the Non-Profits that Serve Them**

This presentation looks at reciprocity within 'helping' organizations that serve sex workers in Costa Rica. Although non-profits offer their services for free, complicated bartering is a necessary part of receiving benefits from such organizations. We will explore the personal commerce of social interaction and the commoditization of people. Just as sex work is often articulated as 'selling yourself' for money, non-profits that serve sex workers require intricate and complex relations of give and take.

I spent last spring researching two non-profits that work to help sex workers in San Jose, Costa Rica. *La Sala*, a secular organization, tries to help empower sex workers individually and as a community in the *Zona Roja* of San Jose. *Fundación Rahab*, a Christian organization, works to guide prostitutes away from the streets and back into dignified and acceptable life situations. The two organizations differ drastically, but each holds certain requirements for their beneficiaries. I will look at how the expectations held by each organization require sex workers to "sell themselves" in a variety of ways.

I grapple with the intimate, perhaps dangerous, position of researcher. Studying other people is a vital and fragile activity. In this presentation I will struggle to understand my own participation within the economy of sex workers and non-profits; gifts were exchanged that allowed me, an outsider, in for purposes of academic exploitation. However, tremendous moral and personal ambiguity is located within this foreign context of exchange.

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**Leah Raffanti '05**

Chicago, Illinois

Major: Dance, Women's Studies

Sponsor: Kim Mills

**Gigs, Money, and Organization: Issues facing a Ghanaian Dance Company in Accra, Ghana**

I will be discussing my time spent in Ghana during the spring, 2004, semester on the CIEE University of Ghana program. Through my experiences working as a promoter for the KaKe Dance Company in Accra, Ghana, I

found that the presence of a Western face encouraged more support, with regard to bookings, attendance at performances, and status, than a Ghanaian hired to do the job would have. Being white, female, a dancer, and a student in addition to the type of performances I was trying to secure for KaKe carried significant weight in Ghana for obtaining this type of support. The cultural context of dance in Ghana (that being the presence of dance in almost every celebration as well as a day to day casual activity) often leads to difficulties in obtaining monetary support for performances. This leads to many dance companies' focus on leaving Ghana to perform in festivals in Europe and the United States. I will look at my interactions with Ghanaians – members of KaKe Dance Company, venue managers, and other dance groups, as well as the differences in the performances I booked and the performances that the company leaders booked, as a basis for my discussion.

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**Kavanah Zoe Ramsier '05**

Williamsburg, Virginia

Major: History

Minor: Women and Gender Studies

Sponsor: Natalie Gummer

**The Little Matchbox Girl: A Story of Comfort and Collection in India**

India is an incredible place. Outdoor barbers, vegetable markets, beautiful children, festivals involving golden pots of yogurt and human pyramids were violent affronts to every sense. My biggest challenge was in understanding that as fascinated as I was with my surroundings, my surroundings were just as fascinated with me.

When I went to India in July of 2003, I had never been to a place where I had no hope of ever fitting in because of differences in my physical appearance, where no matter how familiar I became with the language, movement, food, or clothing, I could never pass as a native. This talk will address the methods I used to become comfortable in a foreign culture where my acculturation process included coming to terms with being on display.

I will discuss the way I was able to turn the discomfort of feeling like a constant spectacle into a comfortable existence by collecting discarded matchboxes. I will describe the way these beautiful matchboxes and my experience collecting them connected me at times and isolated me at other times, as well as the extent to which I began to see Indian culture reflected by the matchboxes.

---

**Glenda Reed '07**

San Francisco, California

**(with Katrina Sterba)**

Major: Philosophy, Art

Sponsor: Sylvia Lopez

**Two Beloit students, one venture grant,  
500 miles walking across Spain**

The Camino de Santiago is a Catholic medieval pilgrimage that modern believers and nonbelievers alike traverse across the north of Spain. Come hear the experiences of two students and how they came to appreciate a religion, a culture and a people. We will be discussing the nuts and bolts of the pilgrimage, the things we ate, where we slept, how we survived, etc. We will also talk about the spiritual and religious components of our experience, what it is like participating in a contemporary pilgrimage. Religion, history, Spanish, backpacking, adventure: if these things interest you, then please come to share in our experiences and learn about the Camino de Santiago.

---

**Rebecca Schaefer '07**

Durham, North Carolina

Major: Undecided

Sponsor: Roc Ordman

**India and New Zealand:  
Holy Cow Dines With Lord of the Rings**

Academic and media portrayals of nations can often cause misperceptions, exploiting generalities and promoting discrimination. Traveling to both India and New Zealand has given me an opportunity to understand and appreciate each country's unique perspective and cultural heritage on a personal level. I describe three months on a study abroad program in India in the spring of 2003, followed by three weeks as a tourist in New Zealand. Indians, often grouped solely on the basis that they inhabit the same country, are very diverse, with an astonishing abundance of spiritual and cultural wealth in the absence of material affluence. New Zealanders, who call themselves Kiwis after the native birds and the fruit of the same name, are friendly, efficient and progressive on the whole.

Despite drastic differences in population size and income, each country faces common questions, such as how to educate their populations to achieve adequate nutrition. In exploring nutrition policies for each nation, I found personal insights from travel critical to supplement my academic research. My research ideas became much more meaningful because of my personal connection to the people of these nations. Looking beyond geographical

borders and statistics, and focusing instead on the personal perspective of individual people, might substantially influence the political choices people make. It is amazing to me what social and cultural constructions we don't even think to question until we are exposed to another way of viewing the world. My educational experience has been enhanced by integrating international travel with stimulating academic reflection.

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**Katrina Sterba '07**

Mineral Point, Wisconsin

**(with Glenda Reed)**

Major: Spanish

Sponsor: Sylvia Lopez

**Two Beloit students, one venture grant,  
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**Gabriel Strader-Brown '07**

Burlington, Vermont

Major: Anthropology

Sponsor: Dan Shea

**Digging Up the Past in Chile**

We will be presenting on the Beloit College field archaeology dig in the Atacama Desert of Chile led by Beloit's own Dan Shea of the anthropology department. We will demonstrate our knowledge of archaeology excavation methods and techniques as well as the knowledge of pre-Chilean culture by the artifacts we uncovered at the site Ramaditas and other historic sites visited on our journey. We will also have the opportunity to present slides from the site as well as the pictures from our camp in Huatocondo and other images reflecting other aspects of present day Chilean culture. And finally we will discuss our interactions with the Chilean culture of today from the small village of Huatocondo to the coastal city of Iquique to the traditional customs in La Tirana.

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**Brandon Strawn '07**

Sheboygan, Wisconsin

**(with Sam Gaty)**

Major: Undecided

Sponsor: Olga Ogurtsova

**Documentary Film Presentation — 2004  
London International Dragon's Lair  
Jousting Tournament**

We will be presenting a documentary video as the culmination of our Venture Grant in creative documentary film-making. The video captures our experience surrounding the 2004 London International Dragon's Lair Jousting Tournament – the largest full-contact heavy armor jousting tournament in the world. While experimenting with passive subjective video journalism, we explored the culture of modern jousting and the people that bring it to life by putting their lives on the line. Questions will be answered at the end of the presentation. The video will eventually be available on the College website for further viewing.

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**Miles Van Reed '06**

Doylestown, Pennsylvania

Major: Anthropology, Classics

Minor: Museum Studies

Sponsor: Dan Shea

**Welcome to the Driest Place on Earth**

Over the past summer, I traveled with Dan Shea and five other students to the Atacama Desert in Chile. Every year, Professor Shea selects several anthropology students to attend this field school and help continue the excavations at Ramaditas, an archaeological site over 2500 years old.

In addition to reviewing the work and results of our excavation, my presentation will describe my experiences within Chilean culture. Aside from hauling buckets of sand under a desert sun, we also made attempts to experience Chile's colorful past. The Atacama in particular has a distinct past, ranging from the art and artifacts of the peoples associated with Ramaditas to contact with Europeans to what is known as the Nitrate Period of the nineteenth century. In an effort to capture these historical influences, we traveled to several archaeological sites and local villages for festivals, museums and ice cream.

Having never traveled abroad before, the experiences I had in Chile were invaluable. In addition to enhancing my education in the local archaeology, the simple fact of being in a foreign country has affected my views of the world and myself. I hope that the audience of this presentation

will come to understand these changes or at least experience some of the excitement of a first time abroad.

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**Andee Vaughan '05**

Kennebunk, Maine

Major: International Relations

Minor: Women and Gender Studies

Sponsors: Beth Dougherty, Diane Lichtenstein

**The Hypocrisy of a Global Sisterhood**

We are in what is called the "Third Wave" of Feminism, which is a great over-simplification of the trends and ideas that have progressed women's struggles. The *title* of this *wave* is Globalization. Now feminists are trying to unite the cause under this umbrella term in order to create a universal movement. This idea, however, has many theoretical problems. One very important problem that many feminist groups face today (and have historically faced when trying to oversimplify a cause, i.e. the women's suffragist movement and marginalizing the Black women, and other women *minorities* of the U.S.) is disenfranchising those that they are trying to reach/embrace.

The Muslim world has seen various attempts of women trying to liberate their sisters through a popular western concept called *unveiling*. Unfortunately, the women who choose not to *unveil*, are often looked down upon by their western sisters as being oppressed, marginalized, and sexually exploited. There is a movement that is opposed to these *western* ideas of feminism. This movement may or may not be considered feminist by those that are taking part in it, however, I argue that it is a feminist movement. The idea of retaining the veil stems from these women's very own traditions and cultural heritage. They wish to embrace their roots and keep their faith. They do not want the world, and the western media to portray them as exotic, helpless, and oppressed women. They want the world to see their strength, their beauty, their intelligence and their force.

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**Kristina Wang '05**

Houston, Texas

Major: International Relations, East Asian Languages and Cultures

Sponsor: Betsy Brewer

**Japanese Elections  
(and How They're Different)**

A large part of why there are only two main political parties in America has to do with the type of election system that America uses for most of its offices. The American way of conducting elections, however, is not the only way to go about it.

Japan, for example, uses a different type of election system, combining what is known as single-member districts and plurality winner (which is used to elect American Representatives) and proportional representation (which is not popularly used in American elections).

Japan's unique election system has also produced some very interesting results related to its party system. How the elections themselves are run is also an interesting topic to contrast with America.

Campaign funding for parties is provided by the government, and with these funds come strict rules to prevent corruption. The number of campaign flyers and pamphlets are limited for each candidate and party. Individual candidates use personal support networks to build up a following in their districts, and top leaders in each political party both run in the district seats and are included at the top of the "party list" side of the ballot in order to ensure they win a seat in parliament. In addition, voters are given not one, but two ballots to fill out and place in separate ballot boxes. In the last elections for both of the houses of Parliament, parties produced "Manifestos" which outlined party goals and party beliefs. Why is this system so different from the American system and is it more representative of Japanese society's desires? Which system is more democratic or offers voters a real chance to influence their government?

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**Sasha Wright '05**

Clinton, Washington

**(with Annie Hostetter)**

Major: Environmental Biology

Minor: African Studies

Sponsor: Robin Greenler and John Greenler

**Presenting Shani Omary:  
A Tanzanian Woman**

We spent our Fall 2003 semester abroad in Tanzania on the ACM Tanzania program. The program focuses intensely on academic excellence and fieldwork in biology and anthropology. We became very familiar with little nooks of Tanzanian culture, including the University of Dar es Salaam and the Masaai community surrounding the Endulen area of northern Tanzania.

The nature of male/female interactions in Tanzania as well as the structure of the ACM program (moving around the country quite often) meant that we often met a small demographic of Tanzanian peoples, usually extremely outgoing Tanzanian men. However, the friendship that we developed with a young woman named Shani Omary was unique both in its existence as well as in its extraordinary emotional and demonstrative capacity. We would like to use this opportunity to introduce you to Shani and to share with you the colorful and uninhibited Tanzania that we saw while by her side.