# Se souvenir par le bricolage: Understanding One's Place Abroad Through Poetic Ways of "Making Do"

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**KEY TERMS:** study abroad, sense of self, sense of place, space, place, a global sense of place, experiential education, globalization, internationalization, power geometry, time space compression, phenomenology, affinity politics

***Pour Amina***

***L'autre moi et la fille absante***

## INTRODUCTION: TOP OF THE HOURGLASS

*Saly-Portudal, Thiès, Senegal – This is the only pictures I have of myself from my time abroad, except a few self-portraits I took using the Photobooth application on my laptop (one of my common practices of every-day documentation, as I find it interesting to track the evolution of self-presentation over time) and the photos digitally captured by others. Otherwise, I am usually the one behind my analogue camera. My partner at the time took this photograph while we went south of Dakar to the Petite Côte for the weekend. Inter-cultural relationships present many challenges, but I am grateful to have known him. His presence was one that greatly shaped my experience and my social landscape, and made understand how a sense of place and place attachment are developed through social relationships*

### My framing question:

*How can an incorporation of contemporary geographical notions of place in the pedagogy of undergraduate study abroad programs make them more progressive and experiential?*

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## Overseas study, globalization, and a progressive and "global sense of place"

Study abroad pedagogies are akin to the situated interdisciplinary approaches of environmental studies and geography in that they are place-based, i.e. focused in a geo-located and specific locale and the social, political, economic and biophysical forces that converge at that said locale. Unique to fields of inquiry such as environmental studies and geography is a focus on the different definitions of place and how they inform our perception of, experience within and sense of belonging in the world. The connection that I posit is beneficial to draw between study abroad pedagogies and geographic notions of place is their common unifier: globalization.

## Globalization's relevance to geography

Globalization is both a shaping force and a condition of the modernity in which we live in the 21st century. Hunter defines it as "the acceleration and intensification and interaction among the people, business, government agencies of different nations" (2016, 1). Globalization is a feature of our time that has led to a greater sense of interconnectedness than ever before (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich 2002). Yet, it has also been theorized that globalization has led to a dissolution of place and fragmentation of contemporary identities, causing individuals and groups to react by closing themselves off and adopt reactionary and bounded politics of place (Harvey 1996).

Scales are different spatial levels that function as the units of geography, e.g. the local, regional, national and global (Hunter 2016). Globalization's key relevance

to geography is that it disrupts and transcends these scales and calls for their reexamination, shedding light onto the ways in which they are socially constructed. Tomlinson describes the process of globalization–or the speeding up, deepening and spreading out of global interconnections–as a "complex connectivity" (1999, 20). Information, commodities, and people now circulate around the world with both ease and necessity. Yet, as social and economic transactions and connectivity occur on a global scale, one's sense of self is affected as a result (Hunter 2016). Global interactivity and connectivity alter the context of meaning construction, effecting one's sense of identity, experience of place and self in relation to place (Tomlinson 1999).

Many geographers have approached notions of place in the contemporary, globalized world from a variety of angles, aiming to uncover what it might mean in the modern and postmodern context. Two of the most noted significant readings of place in the context of globalization are by David Harvey (1996) and Doreen Massey (1991). Harvey, as a radical human geographer, was concerned with the political economy of place constructed under capitalism. He wrote his account in response to an emerging politics of place that was reactionary and exclusionary. In other words, he focuses on how place is used in the global context to define one group of people over another as well as against each other and socially constructed under conditions such as capitalism, patriarchy heterosexism, postcolonialism, (Cresswell 2004, 51). In globalization, capital moves freely around the globe; it is mobile, in contrast to place, which is fixed as a "locus for collective memory" (61). Harvey considers place to be the site where identity is created through the construction of memories linking

a group of people to the past. Thus, the mobility of capital in globalization is felt in tension with place as a conditional form of "permanence" in the flow of space and time (57). In sum, Harvey's work on place argues that globalization processes have led to a dissolution of place and a fragmentation of contemporary identities which, in turn, has led to a rise in xenophobia and reactionary, place-bound politics as people search for old certainties and struggle to construct a more stable, or place "bounded" identity.

Seen as the new cornerstone for popularized notions of place within contemporary geography, Doreen Massey calls for a more progressive "global sense of place," where place is understood as a meeting point, or the unique moment of connection in a wider series of flows (Massey 1991, Hunter 2016).

> [W]hat gives place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that is constructed out of particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus. (Massey 1991, 28)

Contrary to Harvey, Massey understands place not as static or fixed, but rather as a process. Instead of viewing the global flows of people, information, products and capital occurring in time and space compression and the globalized world as anxiety-provoking and something to be resisted, she calls for the "need to face up to–rather than simply deny–people's need for attachment of some sort, whether through place or anything else" (26). She proposes that positive and progressive way to integrate the global and the local, beginning by seeing place as a process:

> If places can be conceptualized in terms of the social interactions which they tie together, then it is also the case that these interactions themselves are not motionless things, frozen in time. They are processes. (29)

Secondly, a global sense of place comes about through defining places not only of what they are immediately composed of, but also by the particularity of what links them to what is beyond, throughout different scales. In addition, it should be understood that place is a site of multiple identities and histories; they do not have one single identity.  However, this does not mean that there is no uniqueness of place–that globalization equates to total homogeneity–but that the specificity of place comes from its particular mixture of local and global social relations.

In sum, David Harvey and Doreen Massey's theories help to illustrate the global significance of place in a global age. Massey's way of understanding places as social moments of experience and understandings is especially of interest because it allow for a sense of place that integrates the local and the global in a positive way. I believe that it is important to incorporate this understanding place into the pedagogy of study abroad because it can make it a more progressive pedagogy when framed alongside an examination of very presence of study abroad programs in western undergraduate colleges and universities. Students who have an awareness of the discursive frameworks that shape the educational experience they participate in will be better equipped to keep a critical perspective on their time abroad.

**Examining the "enterprise" of study abroad**

My participation in a study abroad program as an American undergraduate student in my 20s is not uncommon. Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich note that, "We are now living in an unprecedented era of study abroad" (2002). The amount of U.S. college students who received academic credit for studying abroad has more than doubled since the time that they wrote this article, totaling 304,467 (Open Doors 2015). Not only was I contributing to an international study abroad trend, but I was also participating in a common practice at Lewis & Clark. For example, this past academic year (2015-16), out of the 2,209 students enrolled, 237 studied in one of our 19 overseas off campus programs for at least on term (Lewis & Clark 2016).

In the age of globalization, US colleges and universities have regarded internationalization as a strategy to integrate a combination of international experiences, cross-border provision of education, as well bring multicultural perspectives into their research, teaching, and engagement missions (National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges 2004). Take my own educational institution as an example, who promotes itself on its world wide representation of both international students and overseas programs, adding to its marketable global

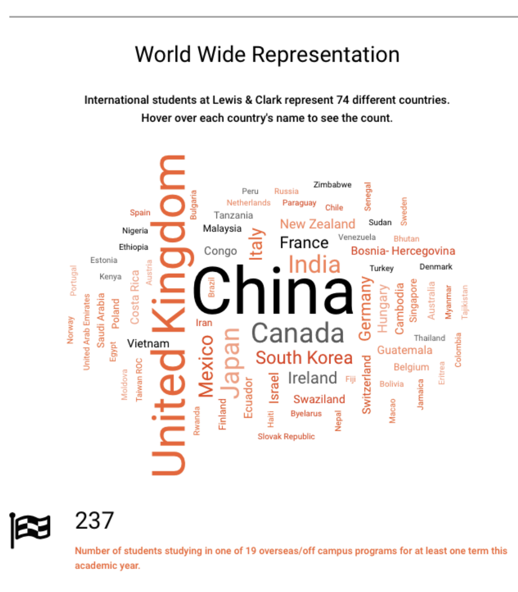


**Figure 1 - From Lewis & Clark's "Undergraduate @ A Glace (2015-16)"**

diversity and educational perspective (see Figure 1). Neoliberal economic reforms centered around deregulation, privatization, liberalization has created a trend amongst US colleges and universities in shifting their approach to study abroad from education as a public good, to a pre-packaged experience or commodity to be sold (Dixon 2006, Bolen 2001).

Biles & Lindley note that many of the key players and literature on study abroad, "fail to recognize the dogma of strong globalization (which purportedly eliminates difference and eradicates local culture) and the practice of overseas study, which seeks to promote cross-cultural understanding and an appreciation of difference" (2009, 1). "Strong globalization" entails a seamless global economy, unfettered market forces, and implies an emergence of a supranational system of political and economic governance, making the world more uniform, integrated and interdependent (Hirst & Tompson 1999). Biles & Lindley propose an alternative "weak" globalization that recognizes the continued importance of geography, scale, acknowledges differences and diversity, and reveals how people in different places and contexts respond to and resist the forces of globalization (2009). Discourse on study abroad justify overseas studies programs at schools on the premise of meeting the demands of consumer-students for a certain set of experiences and skills that purportedly better enable them to compete in the global marketplace. Thus, the presence of a variety of programs works as a marketing point for the school.

Additionally, criticism of overseas study as an "enterprise" of US colleges and universities reflects the corporate business model of post-secondary learning institutions, where the labor necessary to create the conditions for these

educational experiences is outsourced to lower costing centers of production:

> For example, in the case of many short-term programs, lower paid "native" or itinerant instructors provide the bulk of classroom teaching and related educational services. However, students do not pay lower tuition for their outsourced education; they often willingly pay a premium to validate their international experience. In order to facilitate outsourcing, "clearinghouses" such as IFSA (Institute for Study Abroad) and CEA (Cultural Studies Abroad) serve as key intermediaries, offering a seamless mechanism for U.S. schools to grant credit for overseas studies activities not offered at students' home institutions. As such, it becomes possible for a student in Country A to take a course offered in Country B, sponsored by an institution in Country C, ultimately promoted by a multitude of private and state-sponsored universities and accredited by nongovernmental agencies (NGOs) throughout the home country. (Biles and Lindley 2009, 151).

The difference between participating undergraduate students and the locals of the host-country, is that the overseas experience is seen as personal betterment as well as an add-on benefit to their college experience, giving them the added economic advantage of 'global experience,' whereas the involvement in overseas study for local populations as educators (teachers, host families and communities) is considered an employment opportunity to take advantage of, but perhaps less beneficial in the long-term. At the very least, the Western undergraduate student has the option to engage participate or not in abroad programs. Yet, in this enterprise is the locally employed are dependent on students making these choices. Returning to Massey, she argues that we must be conscious of the *power geometry* that shapes our experience of place (1999). *Power geometry* is the distinct ways in which different social groups and individuals are placed in relation to the flows and interconnections of time space compression; this placement is both who has mobility and who doesn't, but also their power in relation to the flows and mobility.

In this instance students are placed in a position of initiation of global movement, whereas the local educators are more on the receiving end of the global movement of study abroad.

So what might geography be able to do in response to make the reality of study abroad less of a “education as a product” and socially and politically progressive (Mitchell 1999)? Geography is strategically positioned to extend the “appreciation of difference” that has made study abroad a transformative experience for so many students. Falk and Kanach (2000) note that learning opportunities must be developed to engage with the place-specific implications of globalization, as well as the ways people resist and respond to globalizing forces. Programs should therefore allow students the opportunity to challenge official views of people and places, develop more nuanced and critical understanding, and gain an appreciation of views and interests. Further, study abroad initiatives can be more progressive in reflecting both the priorities of home institutions and the needs and aspirations of the host countries, achieved through increased participation of host institutions and communities in the planning and implementation of program activates (Biles & Lindley 2009). Finally, developing a more nuanced and critical understanding of study abroad can be achieved through making the type of education itself an object of inquiry, as I aim to do here within this zine.

**Framing study abroad as an experiential pedagogy, while still remaining “progressive”**

Like geography, globalization has an intimate relationship with overseas education. Globalization is an inherent element of the existence and reality of study

abroad. As a process that creates global interconnectedness and interdependence, globalization takes on a two-fold discourse of national and global competiveness, efficiency, consumption, and productive citizenship; as well as the less prevalent counter-hegemonic discourse containing values of global civic responsibility, service to community, respect for the environment and a shared sense of belonging to a common human community across borders (Roman 2003). Many colleges and universities have adopted a discourse of globalization that positions educational institution with the role of training students to be “global citizens” in the face of harsh inequalities between developed and developing nations. International educational experiences are seen as an ideal method for fostering global citizens, i.e. individuals with a heightened awareness of cultural differences and our need to understand each other in order to overcome the global challenges we face in health, environmental sustainability, and violence (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich 2002). Global citizenship, along with language acquisition, is understood as one of the main benefits of study abroad pedagogies, including, “the development of a global world view, increased involvement in other cultures, and global understanding (Burn 1980, Abrams 1979, Kauffman et al. 1992). Programs provide students with exposure to diverse customs and alternative ways of thinking, which is necessary in developing an appreciation for difference (Katula & Threnhauser 1999).

Study abroad programs, are frequently associated with their experiential quality; first hand, in-place experience is necessary for the development of global citizenship (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich 2002). However, not all study-abroad programs are experiential education by definition. Experiential education is the

educational philosophy that was first articulated by John Dewy, and later built on by others, where theory on education is rooted in and transformed by experience. Experiential Learning Theory is defined as “a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills and clarify values” (Association for Experiential Education 2013).

Experiential learning theory developed out of an educational trend in learning from first-hand experiences and holistic perspectives that connect the encounter or exposure with the construction of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and the transfer of learning (Kolb and Kolb 2005). Learning experiences do not “just happen,” but are planned events with meaning (Hunter 2016). Further, reflection is key component of the experiential learning process; Dewey (1933) posits that **experience** followed by **reflection** results in growth through linking current experience to previous learning. In addition, reflection is a process that involves revoking cognitive and emotional information from one’s various senses.

It is noteworthy that experiential education is rooted in constructivist theories of teaching and collective or cooperative learning, which suggest that knowledge is constructed individually and collectively through reflection on experience (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich 2002). Meaning is not inherent in experience. Instead, knowledge is socially constructed as people interpret it (Searle 1995). In other words, learning is the exercise whereby knowledge is produced through the transformation of experience (Kolb 1984).

Experiential education is a logical partner with study abroad because they share a common goal of preparing students to be global citizens and empowering them to work for personal and social transformations (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich 2002). In order to be considered a form of experiential education study abroad programs must broaden the student's awareness of the problems of the others within their global community how they present themselves locally. Dewy (1938) makes clear that for a system of education aimed on connections between knowledge creation based on personal experience, there must be a focus on the concerns of the community where the learning is taking place. An awareness of the local concerns must also be paired with critical analysis and reflection that includes social analysis that problematizes questions about the economic, political, cultural, and religious or ideological aspects of the society. Questions such as, "What are the dominant cultural groups?" or "When problems are being studied, whose voices are heard? Whose are excluded?" must be asked when studying abroad (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich 2002, 56 ).

**A phenomenology of place**

Hunter notes that "simply being in a new place does not guarantee change," however for those who have grown up around little cultural diversity, "the knowledge gained through an immersion experience abroad has the possibility of radically changing their perspective" especially of their understanding of place (Hunter 2016). I would like to pay some attention to the an idea of a "phenomenology of place," and posit that it connects to critical and progressive

experiential pedagogy of place because it functions as a mode of inquiry to understand how people experience place. Understanding the existential components of place will better equip students overseas in developing modes of inquiry while abroad that develop deep relationships with other human and nonhuman beings through self-determination.

A key assumption of phenomenology is that person and world are “intrinsically connected, literally interdependent” (Graumann 2002, 98). A phenomenology of place should be used not only to inform the student’s experience of their host-country, but also linked with an affinity politics involves creating noncoercive, cooperative, and spontaneous relationships with other human and non human beings (Larsen & Johnson 2012).

As noted in previous sections, the term “place” is a highly contested term. In its simplest definition, place is defined as “a physical environment or space” (Merriam Webster 2016a). However, place is revealed through the study of geography to be a composed of the physical landscape, the human and cultural environment, and how these elements interact with each other to make place unique. Agnew (1987) has theorized that place has three dimensions: locale, or the setting for social action; locality, or the arrangement of settings relative to broader scales of political economic processes; and a sense of place, i.e. the meanings and attachments associated with locale. According to Tuan (1997) place is distinguished from space when it is endowed with value and meaning, allowing a given locality or landscapes the ability to hold varying meaning s for different groups and individuals. Places are perceived differently according to the cultural background,

education, gender, age, socialization and socioeconomic position of each individual (Relph 1976, Tuan 1975).

Phenomenology exists as a form of inquiry that focuses on human perceptions and experiences (Merleau-Ponty 2002, Willis 2001). Phenomenological work points to place as the singular existential ground for thought, action, and understanding, concluding that existence is placed (Larsen & Johnson 2012). Casey (2001) defines place as the immediate environment of ones lived body–an area of action that is at once physical, historical, cultural and social. Place is how the world presents itself, i.e. being requires a place, a situation, for its disclosure. One can gain cultural understanding and compassion for how others experience the forces of globalization through questioning and pushing against the boundaries of situatedness–the a longstanding tradition of geography to differentiate the known from the unknown–in an effort to articulate the imperfect and incompletely elusive "other" that lies beyond the horizon (McGreevey 2001, Preston 1997). Phenomenological ways of thinking suggest that exploration and reflection into place as an existential situatedness might yield different insight into the human condition and guide productive and compassionate ethical relationships and actions.

Larson & Johnson pair phenomenological ways of considering place with an *affinity politics*, which possesses an "ethical commitment to helping people develop the capacity to determine the conditions of their own existence without direct recourse to the institutions of civil society" (2012, 633). The ability to determine the conditions of their own existence involves creating "noncoercive, cooperative,

and grounded relationships through which such self-determinations are realized in practices of mutual aid that bypass state and its institutions" (643). An existential awareness of place is related to this affinity politics in that it carried out through encounters with human and nonhuman others, through an "open" sense of place, an attunement to wonder and compassion and wonder toward the boundedness and the inconstancies if the "lifeworld". The lifeworld is understood as "the totality of an individual person's direct involvement with the places and environments experienced in ordinary life without accepting the analytical separation of subject from object (Buttimer and Seamon 1980, Hunter 2016, 13). Study abroad programs should therefore strive to create the conditions for mutual aid amongst participants and local communities via a collaborative effort to reflect on the effects the nature of overseas programing has on all parties involved. Collectively evaluating the experience of overseas studies has the power to be of mutual aid because the first-hand knowledge of experience can be used as a resource to develop methods of mutual benefit and collective learning.

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## MIDDLE OF THE HOURGLASS: SITUATED CONTEXT

**Focus question:**

*How does zine-making function as a reflective space that is critical for the reentry process and for the promotion of a progressive experiential pedagogy for study abroad?*

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A situated context is central to situated environmental inquiry because it characteristically recognizes the glocal nature of place and ties together multiple forces and perspectives at play in the topic of inquiry. Additionally, it is guided by a focus question, which draws from the information presented at the top of the hourglass, to focus in at the middle of the hourglass on a particular issue that exists on an answerable scale. In other words, a new question is asked which focuses in enough to grapple with a subject matter, but not so much that the broader and more generalizable dimensions of an issue are not lost, so that a focused context remains relevant to other issues and that something might be done or reconsidered in response.

I choose to situate my senior capstone exploration in my personal experience of studying abroad in Dakar, Senegal in 2015. Through my participation I found that study abroad had three distinct phases: pre-departure (in home culture), abroad (in location of study), and reentry (to home culture).

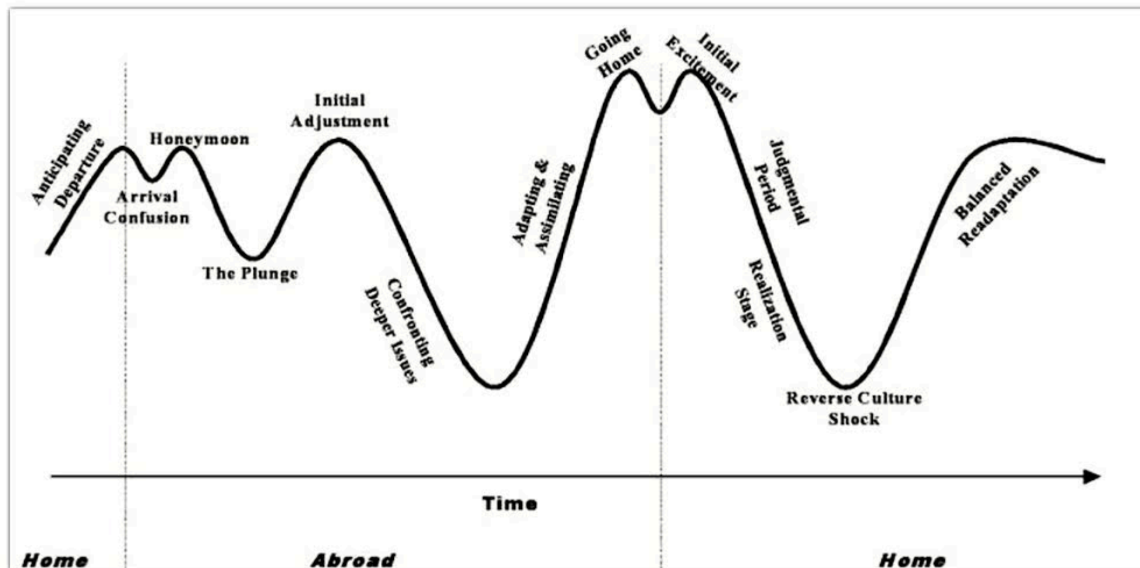


**Figure 2 - "Study Abroad Emotional Rollercoaster" Taken from https://urtravelogues.wordpress.com/2014/09/02/diana-in-germany-the-preparation-stage/**

Within the structure of overseas and off-campus study at Lewis & Clark College, there are varying degrees of preparation, or pre-trip orientation, for students who have been accepted into programs. In my case, I had three trip-specific orientation meetings, and one orientation meeting for all the programs traveling abroad in the spring of 2015. Depending on who you ask in my study abroad group, I would expect that there would be varying opinions on how prepared each individual felt as a result. Informal conversations I had with a few of my group members regarding our impending departure gave me the impression that it was not a concern for some–they believed that only basic information was necessary, not a complete cultural orientation, so as to not form strong expectations or assumptions about the country and its people. There were others, including myself, who were left with no feeling of a strong understanding for what to expect. I acknowledged that the program itself was limited: it is not highly attended (my group was considered significantly larger than normal at ten participants); the

language requirement, French, is among the course offerings of the college; it is a "general culture" program that transfers most of the educating responsibility onto the educational partner aboard, African Consultants International (ACI); and there is no faculty leader traveling with students in country. Therefore, the orientation is condensed into a few meetings programmed to accommodate students schedules, instead of a semester-long meetings and/or language instruction. Additionally, the orientation is facilitated by one of the French Studies faculty members, who as traveled to Senegal, but does not have regular or extended experience with the culture.

I tried to approach my limited scope of what my future abroad entailed with the idea that "you don't really know until you get there." I still think that the everyday reality abroad varies among participants, depending on their particular academic, emotional, and social conditions prior to their arrival. Leaving home does not mean that the realities of home will also be left behind–you take with your former life conditions with you. Rather, they continue to be your life conditions, as you also are encountering and responding to the conditions of being in a different, most likely new, place. However, in hindsight I believe that it would've been beneficial to make space in my preparation for my program to identify my preconditions. An awareness of both the positive and negative feelings held toward my impending endeavor had the potential to increase my consciousness of the hidden or subconscious biases and expectations I held. Moreover,in naming what I was both excited and apprehensive of could've provided a collection of potential points of meditation or focus during the sojourn. For I find it coincidental that I

questioned my preparedness and the structural aspects of my experience prior to leaving, and here I am now, figuring an exploratory reflection on the experience of studying abroad into my senior capstone project. One can only wonder that had I developed an explicit awareness of this as one of my pre-departure concerns, perhaps I could have greater integrated a reflection on how the pre-departure orientation affected my time abroad when it was most immediately relevant–as a I was abroad. Instead, I am addressing these issues more than a year removed from their happening.

The founding reason for my travel across the Atlantic was to participate in Lewis & Clark College's study abroad program, though I did prolong my stay for the summer at the end of my program for an internship and to continue developing a closeness and familiarity with the social and built landscape Dakar. My participation in the program was done mostly in fulfillment of the major requirement for French Studies of a minimum of one semester abroad in a francophone (i.e. French speaking) country, as well as the college's international studies requirement.

Yes, there was also some personal interest in visiting Senegal, but the excitement of an impending learning-focused adventure was eclipsed by an anxiety about my ignorance of the ethics on study abroad, an apprehension that the structure of my academic programming while in country was not politically critical enough. Was my participation in a French language-intensive overseas program hosted in a country that was a former French colony a new way to practice old forms of colonial linguist imposition? In other words, am I implicit in neo-colonialism through my participation? What are the power structures amongst

undergraduate students and local educators? What are the pedagogic structure and theory used by the overseas studies programs at my Lewis & Clark, and are they ones that I support or believe could be radically improved?

These questions kept me feeling unconfident and unprepared for my departure. They shook me even more once I finally made it abroad. Each one of these questions are loaded and merit their own research project. As a result, I found it challenging to engage with them as I was in an adaption phase, oversaturated with constant stimulus from new conditions. Just getting through my days and trying to find understanding and some sort of consistency amongst my study abroad group members, host family, immediate community members (neighbors, shop keepers, guardians, and regulars in our neighborhood we were advised to develop relationships with out of security and personal safety concerns) teachers and staff at school was enough. This in addition to long hours in the classroom left me completely exhausted at the end of most of my days, making the a rigorous, academically leaning investigation of my aforementioned concerns difficult to take on independently.

However, after a while I began to realize that being hung up on these questions was preventing me from engaging as actively as I could with the people and environment surrounding me–I was quiet, pensive, almost to the point of being absent. I abandoned an explicit focus on them an gave into developing my social relationships and finding locations in the city–bars, restaurants, learning centers, beaches and street corners–where I felt comfortable, and began inhabiting them regularly with aims of integrating myself in their happenings so that I might be

included. Becoming a regular at my neighborhood restaurant *Le Mermoz,* allowed me to not be just some *toubab* (the Wolof term for Westerner, often associated with the economically affluent traveler) at the bar, but a community member, someone who's absence was noticed if I hadn't come around in a few days. Becoming a community member in this place of social gathering allowed me to have discussions with professors of ecology from Dakar's Cheik Anta Diop about reconciling traditional folklore and the science behind global warming in mangrove restoration projects; to be invited to social and religious functions such as Islamic baptisms and Catholic first communions; engaged in the entrepreneurial efforts of friends as a financial supporter and translator; and invited on visits to other neighborhoods in Dakar and other towns and regions in Senegal. My social engagement with Le Mermoz was foundational for my formation of a sense of place while abroad. Through frequenting a place regularly, I developed a bond between the people that I interacted with associated this bond with Le Mermoz to develop what is know as "place attachment" (Kudryavtsev et al. 2011). Additionally, my sense of place came about through a development of "place meaning" via the creation of memories at this specific locale. This is how I learned to feel comfortable with my irreconcilable questioning of *why am I here, abroad in Senegal? Am I supposed to be here? And if not, says who (myself? politically-conscious academics? locals?)*: I learned to throw myself into developing a strong sense of place through a connection to people and locales. I began to use place as way of understanding, as Creswell highlights:

> [P]lace is also a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world. When we look at the world as a world of connections between people and place. We see worlds of meaning and experience. (2004, 11)

"Place meaning" is another theorized term that fits with my experience. Relph (1976) associates "place meaning" with objects, physical settings and activities, making clear that they are not property of the place, but human intentions and experiences. Ultimately, place meaning comes from the experiences had in a place. It is a function of the passing of time and the increasing familiarity with a locale (Taylor et al. 1985).

Place attachment is an appropriate theory for my practice I used for making do while abroad. Understanding my experience of being abroad in terms of the dynamic of my place attachment is crucial because it also offers the potential for a critique. For instance,

> Place-attachment can lead to isolation, NIMBY-ism, environmental determinism, essentialism, and xenophobia, and often accompanies a nostalgia for 'the country,' a pastoral myth, or pure wilderness constructions of nature that fail to account for their dialectical relationship with other places… (Ray 2013)

Making meaning in a foreign country with minimal prior cultural knowledge before arriving must consider the potential for developing essentialist notions of place when they are only built off of first-hand experience. Here I would argue that they should be complimented with a global sense of place; that one's experience of place is not only perceived through human senses, but shaped by global forces–places are open and subject to change.

Considering the way in which someone creates sense of place while abroad, it must also be noted that sense of place can have both positive and negative components (Kidder 2016). In other words, someone can still feel and connection, attachment or identify with place, even if it is through a negative connection. This

component of a sense of place while abroad can come from the "good" and the "bad" experiences, making for an emotionally dynamic sense of place. I can attest, from my own experience with challenges and exposure to incidents of physical and emotional trauma had while abroad are a component of the "place meaning" that Senegal has for me and that forms my sense of place. Learning of this characteristic of a sense of place while researching theory on place was very moving. It made space for the traumatic circumstances to be recognized as a part of the emotional landscape I feel for a location (and the emotional, social and historical meanings it holds), and transformed the way I am beginning to open up to this trauma.

Acknowledging that the "experience" of studying abroad program is trifold, let's conclude this phase of the experience that still persists: reentry. The final phase an overseas experience is defined as "the process of returning home after spending time abroad" (World Learning SIT Study Abroad 2008). The traditional view of reentry is focused on the emotional challenges, yet it is also noted that:

> It is a powerful experience that has the potential to allow for personal growth, to provide mobility for social action and civic engagement, to enhance skills for your professional life, and lastly the ability to further your knowledge about the world and your place within it. (5)

Besides focusing on the emotional challenges, it is suggested that students:

- Meaningfully connect with others through social action or civic engagement
- Integrate their new experiences into your academic and professional life
- Find ways to continue to embody the global understanding that you experienced abroad

The concept of the "reentry" worm, designed by Margaret D. Pusch, is a generalized theory of how a student experiences reentry, summarized by a curved line

representing the range of emotions and different phases of the experience.

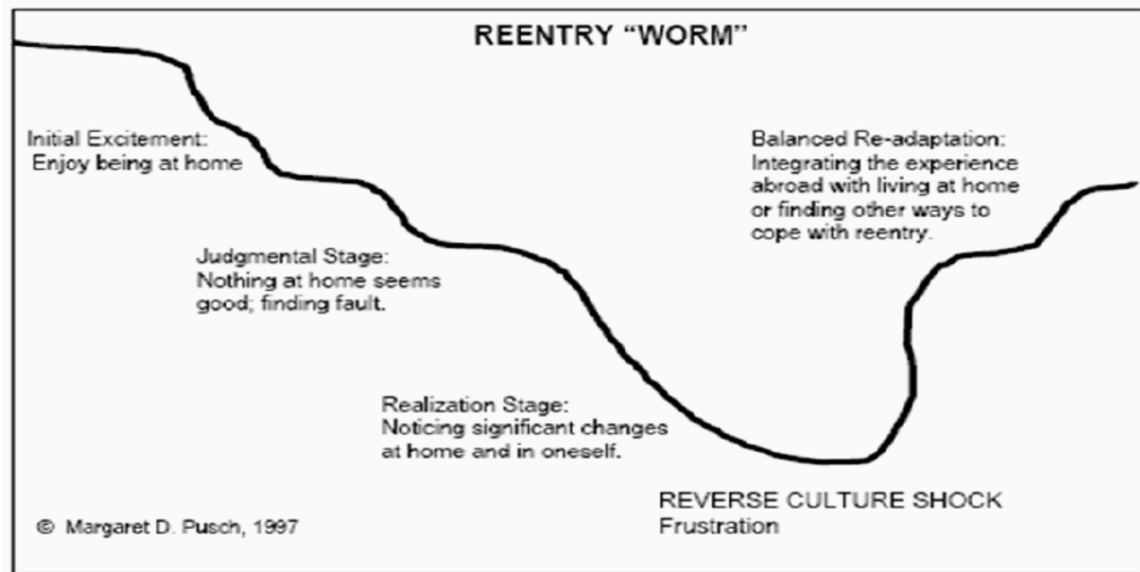


Figure 3 - The Reentry "Worm" (World Learning SIT Study Abroad 2008)

The moment of interest is reverse culture shock, defined as "the process of readjusting, reacculturating, and reassimilating into one's own home culture after living in a different culture for a significant period of time" (Gaw 2000, 84-85). Reverse culture shock is experienced in different ways: some students might experience few, if any, shock, whereas it can last for a few months, to up to a year for others. (Adler 1981, Carlisle-Frank 1992). The common side effects reported on culture shock include: academic problems, cultural identity conflict, social withdrawal, depression, anxiety, and interpersonal difficulties (Kittredge 1988, Martin 1984, Martin 1986, Raschio 1987, Sahin 1990, Zapf 1991). Returnees have also been reported to experience alienation, disorientation, stress, value confusion, anger, hostility, compulsive fears, helplessness, disenchantment, and discrimination (Adler 1981, Church 1982, Hannigan 1990, Locke & Feinsod 1982, Raschio 1987,

Zapf 1991). An important factor of the experience of reverse culture shock is that it results when a sojourner expect to return home as unchanged individuals to unchanged circumstances, when this is typically not the case.

Discovering the existence of the concept of reverse culture shock during this research was another moment of personal realization: I was able to put a name to what I was experiencing once I returned from Senegal. My reentry experience roughly followed the curve of the reentry worm and the reverse culture shock I experienced included the side effects of depression, anxiety, academic challenges, a loss of former identity or strong sense of self, value confusion, disenchantment or a loss of hope in things I used to believe it. I struggled to make space to understand my experiences, as I was thrown back into the stress-inducing college environment only three weeks after returning back to the US, which occupied much of my emotional energy and time. Reintegrating back into the pace of school was jarring, yet I felt alone and isolated in my experience of difficultly because everyone around me seemed to be handling the transition back to Lewis & Clark with minimal visible struggle. Learning of the fact that reverse culture shock varies amongst students helps in validating the difference I felt. However, these realizations and affirmations were not made until months following the most intense moments of this reverse culture shock when I decided to refocus this senior capstone project into a reflection on my abroad experience grounded in theory on place. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to use this project as a creative academic space to channel the emotional side effects of my reentry, yet I do believe that there could be more explicit and structured help provided for students to interrogate, reflect on, and

understand the nature of the study broad experience, in all of its phases. Here we should dwell on the potential of the zine as the mechanisms to bring about the changes needed to both offer students critical spaces of reflection and support during the overseas experience.

**So what's a zine and what can it do?**

A zine is a defined as, "a noncommercial often homemade or online publication usually devoted to specialized and often unconventional subject matter." (Merriam Webster 2016b).  Originating in the 1970s punk scene, zines have a history of defying longstanding conventions (Knobel & Lankshear 2001). They are countercultural form systematically opposed to conventional norms and values associated with publishing, establishment views, and "schoolish" reading and writing. That is not to say that they are not academic. Instead, zines often incorporate the academic theory and subvert and challenge it through the insertion of the author's subjectivity and reflection on how it relates to their everyday lives. Additionally, zines use a range of textual forms including straight prose, poems, literary and film narratives, cartoons and comic strips, clip art, collages and so on. The creativity characteristic within zines lies within the fact that they are thematically diverse, taking on the subject matter which is relevant to the author(s). Further, a zine may specialize in a single theme across all its issues, or cover diverse themes within single issues or across issues.

The logic of zines is highly tactical, making them ideal for what Knobel & Lankshear (2001) call a "pedagogy of tactics." They build this claim off of the writing of de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), based on the distinctions

between producers and consumers, and strategies and tactics. They claim that de Certeau's approach has enormous potential for issues of power and subordination for critically informed educational practices. de Certeau presents "producers" as those who create, maintain, impose disciplined spaces; they have the position and power to prescribe social orders and syntactical forms, e.g. discourses, time tables, procedures and the organization of space and the things within it. Drawing from a former example, we could consider US colleges and universities as the producers of the discourse of study abroad that is based on strong globalization and internationalization. In contrast, "consumers" are those who are constrained to operate within these disciplined spaces and structures. Following the similar example, both US college students studying abroad and the local educators from their host-country are the "consumers." "Strategies" are the art of powerful producers.

> These 'subjects of will and power' operate from their own place (a 'proper') which they have defined as their base for controlling and managing relations. This place (or 'proper') is an enclosed institutional space within which producers regulate distributions and procedures, and which has 'an exteriority comprised of targets or threats. (de Certeau 1984, 36)

For de Certeau consumers have "uses" and "tactics" instead; these are the "arts of the weak in which the weak make disciplined spaces 'smooth' and 'habitable' through forms of occupancy" (Knobel & Lankshear 2001). Consumers use tactics to obtain success in their practices of everyday life in face of the limits that producers create around them and to "make do" by turning events in order to turn them into opportunities. Finally, these everyday creativities of the consumers are thought of by de Certeau as "trajectories" that can be mapped as a dynamic tracing of temporal

events and acts. Knobel & Lankshear (2001) theorize that zines can be thought of in terms of de Certeau's trajectories as vibrant, volatile, thriving social practices that reflect the thoughts and culture of their makers. Zines embody what de Certeau calls "bricolage," or the artisan–like inventiveness of consumers everyday practices, where they use whatever comes in hand in carrying out these practices. In other words, "bricolage" embodies poetic ways of "making do."

Seeing as zines are a format of mix-methods information sharing and reflection, they offer up the perfect space for students to "make do" and reflect on their everyday realties while they recover from time abroad, tying together creative, personal, and academically-informed writing. Zines are critical in nature in challenging and are expressions of subjectivity and "provide revisioning and strategic potential that bridge the gap between theory and practice (Licona 2012, 15). Therefore, they exist as a prime methodology for students to also explore the subjectivity of experience, while critically engaging with theory on the world as it exists, on all scales, in the modern globalized context.

## BOTTOM OF THE HOURGLASS: LARGER IMPLICATIONS

Where to go from here? This zine has functioned as an experimental and reflective space where I've aimed to draw connections between the interdisciplinary fields of environmental studies and geography and their connections to the pedagogy of study abroad through a variety of methods: a presentation of Massey's global sense of place, an examination of the "enterprise" of study abroad, an acknowledgment of the affinities between the pedagogies of experiential education

and those that of study abroad, and highlighting how phenomenological understandings of place can create a critical geographic framework to situate experiential aspects of studying abroad. I dwelt on these theoretical aspects of place because they are what helped me to understand both how I made meaning while abroad and found intellectual solace during my reentry process.

Through creating this project in the format of a "zine," I hope to validate that this literary form, composed of a mixing of subjective/reflective and academic writing, has a place in undergraduate scholarly work. However, it is important that the zine does not stop as an academic project to be submitted and archived in school records. Following the tradition of small-scale publishing and dissemination of zines amongst relevant communities, I intend on creating a print copy to be shared with members of my academic communities including those in the ENVS department, French Department, and past and future Senegal program participants.

Yet, sharing only my perspective only provides one voice (even if it is a collection of other voices, including my own) on topics that require dialogue. As Lutterman-Aguilar, and Gingerich note, experiential education requires collaboration and dialogue, "for individuals are rarely if ever capable of perceiving all angles of a problem or grasping all aspects of an issue alone" (2002, 57). Therefore, in addition to individual engagement in reflection and understanding of the global/local and subjective/generalizable dynamics of their experience abroad via zine-making for those who need or seek it, it would be beneficial for students of a study abroad group to work collaboratively on a zine in any stage of the abroad experience (or one that encompasses all phases). I propose that the Overseas Offices

organize informal meet-ups for students to discuss experiences overseas, the unique connections and perspectives their major(s) brings to the understanding them, brainstorm ways to better integrate their time abroad into their present and every day life (both as a student and individual) and then transform into contributions for a student-driven zine project. I am hesitant to make the claim that zines should be completely adopted as a methodology for reentry by the Overseas office, because then "producers" would be adopting the "tactic" of "consumers" and transforming it into a "strategy;" that would be a subversion of the traditions of zine-making. Instead, I believe zines should at least be on the table as an a potential outlet for students to engage meaningfully and critically with their participation in a study abroad program.

In closing, I would like to propose different points of departure for further research related to the broader issues that touched down within this text:

- Investigations into the various critiques of experiential education and examples of the pedagogy in practice (do they exists? Are they instances of the success or the challenges of experiential education?)
- Greater inquiry into the experience of local educators and their experience of the "enterprise" of study abroad; qualitative evaluations on their perceptions of its effects on their communities
- A dismantling of the ethics of study abroad, focusing on the arguments critiquing the practice and best ways to alter current practices to respond to these critiques
- An investigation of the structure and educational philosophies of the Lewis & Clark Overseas and Off- Campus Programing and how this shapes student experience
- A qualitative comparative study of the reentry process for returning Lewis & Clark students, looking into how the nature of experience abroad translates to a reintegration into the liberal arts academic environment
- Researching various pre-departure orientation methods, the academic lenses through which they're framed and the degree in they left students feeling with a prepared for their experience abroad

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