

MOSAIC

Spring 2011

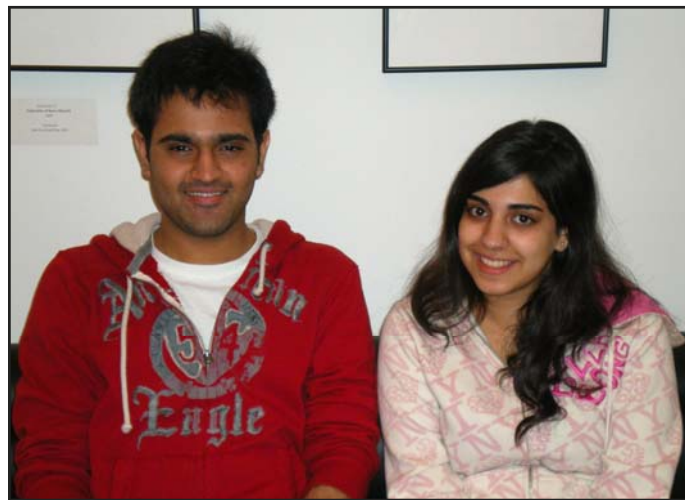


MOSAIC & THE SPECTATOR

Coming together to showcase a Global Grinnell

Dear Readers,

Grinnell is a melting pot of international ideas, experiences and people! We have been the editors of similar but unique publications (The Spectator and MOSAIC) and we saw the opportunity to create a common publication—with a broader focus on global themes at Grinnell. International students and scholars, study-abroad participants, staff, faculty and community members, and even alumni—each can tell different stories about their global experiences. That is why we merged the Spectator with MOSAIC, both being publications that had looked at global Grinnellians from different perspectives. Together, we aim to connect with a broader audience and to showcase and celebrate stories of global and local relevance.



In this issue we have intentionally drawn from a variety of voices on and off campus, with a special eye toward the activities of the CIS, OCS, and OISA. We also sought the support of staff, faculty, and students in this endeavor. David Harrison, Richard Bright, Karen Edwards and the SPARC committee are especially invested in the success of this publication, and we also (as student leaders in this initiative) are enthusiastic about the possibilities.

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We hope you all enjoy reading this 'new' publication just as much as we have enjoyed exploring all the crevices of global experiences that Grinnellians participate in. From perspectives on the situation in the Middle East & North Africa to the experience of chai (tea) drinking in India to teaching foreign languages to members of our very own Grinnell community, we have begun to capture a wide variety of perspectives that constitute a global Grinnellian. But this is just the starting block. We hope you, our readers, will appreciate this new direction. It can only grow with your support and contributions. Happy reading!

- Anuraag Bhadana '11 & Naina Chhiber '13 (Editors)

Congrats IPOC '11 (International Pre-Orientation Committee) *IPOC helps plan and conduct the International Pre-Orientation Program*



Clockwise from top left:

- Alyce Eaton '13, USA
- Keneil Brown '14, Jamaica
- Gretchem Aikens '12, Mexico / USA
- Abraham Kohrman '13, USA
- Liyan Chen '12, China
- Shunji Ukai '12, Japan
- Lily Jamaludin '14, Malaysia / Romania
- Sapir Blau '14, Israel / Romaina

Prayers for Japan

- Shunji Ukaï '12, Japan

Before I even noticed that the earthquake had struck Japan, my father sent me a message. He simply wrote, "Everyone is safe." Since I did not know about the earthquake, I was confused by his seriousness. When I checked the news I realized how powerful his brief message was. They are alive. That was the only information that was important. After I came to know about the earthquake, I could not stop watching the online news broadcasts because I wanted more information. Every minute, the newscasters reported more casualties who had been swept away by the tsunami. The reporter would say, "The self defense force found two to three hundred bodies on the shore, but due to the danger of further tsunami and aftershocks, they cannot go near that place." Two to three hundred people dead on the shore? How can this be? How can human lives be swept away so easily? Each and every one of them had families, a personality, memories, good and bad habits, emotions, weekend plans, future dreams... Where did they all go? Just thinking about their lives and families tortured me with sorrow.

I was relieved to learn that Kohei Takatsuka's '13 and Chinami Towatari's '14 families and friends are also safe. But, all these connections were greatly affected by the earthquake. Their stories showed me that this earthquake was not fiction. Kohei's mother had to evacuate from their house in Tokyo. His father had been on the bullet train when the earthquake happened, and he walked several hours only to spend the night in a hotel lobby. Chinami was not able to reach her father that first night, since he had stayed in a place without internet access, but they finally connected with great relief. I also offer thoughts for other Grinnellians who are connected to my home in some way. Professor Yasuko Akiyama, Sam Krauth '14, Hyunjung Kim, Professor Mariko Shigeta Schimmel, Mr. Nobuyoshi Asaoka, and to Misato Sawada '10 (who is safe in Tokyo) and any Grinnell students on off-campus study there. I hope their connections are safe and their hearts can find peace. During these days, I can only offer helpless prayers for the safety of the people in Japan. Never in my life have I felt so powerless.

However, Japan is strong. Even in this unprecedented disaster, I was able to feel that people are sustaining dignity and patience. Kohei's father shared that while he was walking through the city, he saw people silently lining up in front of a completely wrecked convenience store to buy supplies. Nobody was complaining about the long line and no one was stealing products in the store. He also said that he did not see anyone panicking, even in a situation when people felt constant danger from the aftershocks. In addition, I saw many Facebook and Twitter posts reporting on how people were helping each other despite the hardships.

Here in Grinnell, immediately after the earthquake struck, many students, faculty, staff, and my host family reached out with encouraging words. I was deeply moved. Likewise, the world is reacting to the disaster with great concern, showing the will to provide help for those who are suffering. Race, gender, age, or ideology do not matter. I feel deep gratitude and reverence toward how the people around the world are responding to the tragedy in Japan. The situation is still grave: the number of casualties is still rising, the aftershocks are still going on, the nuclear plant still has a danger of exploding, and more than 460,000 people are homeless. But, with the help of everyone around the world, Japan will recover and we will find joy again.



Prayers for Japan,
written by Shunji

We are planning a fundraiser for victims. Do you want to help? Do you want to be updated? Please email and let me know!

- Shunji

ukaishun@grinnell.edu

Bringing the Global, Local



Claire & Philippe Moisan, with their children Luc, Charlotte, & Julien, and host daughters Nikeisha Sewell (Jamaica) & Sahar Jalal (Morocco)

“The College is a valuable partner. Over the years we have collaborated to connect students to the Arts Center as volunteers, teachers, and creative minds. Claire and Philippe Moisan have played an integral role in that collaboration. Claire works tirelessly connecting students with the Arts Center. Her desire to see foreign language as a key element in our children’s lives helped design Babel Tower, incorporating language and culture into our programming. More recently, we collaborated with Philippe and the French Department to bring “Parisian Nights” to Grinnell. We hosted a wonderful photo exhibit featuring students who traveled to France. French films at ‘The Strand,’ the photo exhibit, and our production of “Waiting for Godot.” (culminating with French desserts) brought three weeks of cultural activities for the College and the community! Creating richer arts programming benefits us all!”

- Judy Arendt, Grinnell Area Arts Council

Claire is employed in Grinnell’s writing lab, where she is appreciated by students and colleagues alike. Philippe is an Associate Professor of French, and is well known for his quiet sense of humor. The couple make a dynamic team and we applaud their efforts to bring global perspectives to the local community! We asked Claire and Philippe to tell us a bit about their engagement:

What brought you to Grinnell? What motivated you to stay?

We came to Grinnell in 1997, when Philippe was offered a position teaching French; I was fortunate to land a job in the Writing Lab the following Spring. The caliber of this institution and its students, the energy and mutual caring of the community are the factors motivating us to build our lives and careers here.

What are a few of the significant changes you have seen in the town of Grinnell?

We’ve seen a lot of changes --from the mundane (the arrival of McDonalds, the moving of Wal-Mart and Fareway) to the sublime (the resurrection of the Strand, the opening of Saints Rest, the expansion of ethnic cuisine to the recent construction of the Drake Library, the pool and the public works buildings and the Arts Center).

What motivates you to put so much energy toward community outreach and education around themes of language and culture?

Claire: One reason I put so much energy into community service is that so many other people do so as well! It seems that everyone I know is working on a community service project or involved here in a significant way. My decision to start a foreign language and culture program for kids was motivated by the fact that the local school district, like so many others, has had to cut back on language instruction, at a time when we need more, *not fewer* intercultural opportunities. I want my children to be fluent in French and to learn another language or two. As an educator, I thought it was important to not only teach my own children to speak French, but also to make the opportunity available in the community.

Philippe: I got involved with Parisian Nights when my colleague, Andrea Magermans, came with a proposal to screen French films. I’ve not seen any foreign films at the Strand, so I thought it would be a great idea to make the films available to the general public. It was also a great opportunity to have other French-themed events in town, and we worked to develop the photo exhibit by students who had studied abroad.



Pete & Timo, with teacher Ruth Campbell '11



“Pete loves learning French, and the college students have been terrific! I love that they are sharing their gifts with the community.”

- Carolyn Jacobsen (mom)

“I was happy, refreshed, and excited to share images of life in ... France.”

- Claire Reeder '11, B.A. History/French, studied in France through IES Nantes, Spring 2010

How to explain four months of discovery, laughter, nerves, fear, bliss, wandering feet, tired feet, new friends, new family – four months of a dream coming true? Photographs, as usual, can do more justice than words.

In the case of my four month odyssey in Nantes, France, photographs capture not just places or people, but full, perfect moments that I always want to remember. As part of “re-entry” to life back in America, our program director encouraged us to select a group of photos that summarized our experience, rather than bombard family and friends with a four-hour slideshow of pictures covering every cobblestone on every narrow French street we explored. So I spent my Paris to Chicago return flight sifting through photos, trying to figure out how on Earth I could narrow 1,000+ pictures down to about 20. I tearfully scrolled through my photos – each one is indeed worth a thousand words?

With a year’s distance on my experience now, the opportunity to go back through my photos for the “Parisian Nights in Grinnell” exhibit did not carry the overwhelming feeling that it had in the immediate moments after my time abroad. Instead, I learned that my memory has distilled a handful of stand-out moments. It was more joyful to curate my experience this time around. I was happy, refreshed, and excited to share images of life in Nantes and around France in this exhibit. For me, each photo is a gateway into all the emotions of those four months, still as fresh as if I snapped it yesterday.”



“Babel Tower has been one of the most memorable experiences of my stay in Grinnell.”

- Chinami Towatari, Exchange Student from Waseda University, Japan

When I arrived in Grinnell, I got to know about the Babel Tower program from Shunji Ukai '12 who had also been an exchange student from Waseda University in Japan. The Babel Tower program is run by the Grinnell Arts Council, which engages college students to teach local people (children and adults) language and culture classes. Through this program, I've helped teach the Japanese language and culture to six children.

Teaching my native language has been an amazing opportunity! I've thought much more about what my culture is like, and learned how hard it is to actually teach people about it. I believe it is really important for the children to learn about new and different cultures – especially from a native speaker! Seeing the interest and excitement in the children's faces has been a really rewarding experience. At first, it was a challenge to organize the classes and to teach content without losing the children's attention. Over time, we have found ways to make the lessons fun and enjoyable. While I am called the teacher, I am also a student! This program enabled me to become closer to the Grinnell community, and has helped me to realize how much I can contribute simply by sharing my culture and language. Since I come from a very large university in Japan, I would have never had an opportunity like this without coming to Grinnell. Studying here gave me this great opportunity. Babel Tower has definitely been one of the most memorable experiences of my stay in Grinnell.



Kohei, Shunji, & Chinami, pictured with Babel Tower students, Julien, Ellis, Cole and Maggie

A Global Education

-David Harrison, Associate Professor of French & Director of Center of International Studies (CIS)



What is “internationalism”? What does it mean to be “globally educated”? I ask myself these questions regularly as I work with Grinnell faculty, staff, and students to create events and opportunities that contribute to the international dimension of a Grinnell education. I love helping faculty like David Cook-Martin (Sociology) bring great scholars like Carlos de la Torre and Carmen Martinez Novo, who were in residence this Fall from Quito, Ecuador, teaching courses on Latin American politics. I love working with students like Sophie Haas and Harley Chang to collaborate on events like the recent Chinese New Year celebration. But, ultimately, I ask the question: what are we trying to accomplish with our various international events, campus visits, lectures, celebrations, etc.? What is our educational mission with these programs and initiatives?

There is a lot of professional literature prescribing “international learning goals” for colleges and universities: much is tedious, jargon-filled, and inapplicable to Grinnell. Furthermore, there is a constant problem of terminology: should we be talking about “global learning” or “international learning”? “Global” seems broader than “international”, which implies the arbitrary political division between nations; but “global” also evokes the term “globalization”, which many view as synonymous with the economic and cultural exploitation of developing nations by richer ones.

With the hope of creating some form of consensus—which may ultimately be impossible—I’d like to propose a few, small goals for international/global learning at Grinnell.

- Grinnell students should learn that *every subject matter* at Grinnell can help them understand the world with greater depth and nuance. Chemistry and Physics can help you understand climate change, which is affecting every place on earth. Sociology, Economics, and Political Science can help you understand how specific societies have distributed authority and who has the power to make important decisions. Religious Studies and Philosophy can help you understand the ideas and rituals that characterize specific people or cultures at a given time in history. English, Art, Music, Theatre and Dance can help you understand the creative languages that are used to express the particular needs of an individual or a group living in a certain place. And then there are the foreign languages, Psychology, Biology, Gender & Sexuality Studies, Environmental Studies.....Yes, *everything* you learn at Grinnell has a global origin and a global application.
- Following the previous point, Grinnell students should graduate with an understanding that, if they want to explore a certain place in the world, they will need to do so by relying upon *many forms of knowledge and skills*. Sure, you can move to Prague and immerse yourself in the local culture. But if you really want to understand Prague—its history, its language, its ecosystems, its social psychology, its construction of gender, its economy, etc.—then you’re going to need to draw upon those disciplines that are represented in the Grinnell College curriculum, including the ones you didn’t study. Otherwise, you’re nothing more than a tourist.
- Grinnell students should learn about the *connections* that link together different places in the world. Such connections include things like political treaties, shared language or religious practices, migration, economic development strategies, or natural resource use. Understanding such connections helps diminish the view of the world as divided into a series of discrete, autarkical units—the view that inspires such Manichean ideas as the “clash of civilizations.” The recent tsunami in Japan has shown that, despite cultural differences between Japan, the United States, and Polynesia, all three places are connected by the same tectonic plate and the same ocean: it would be foolish to ignore this geological similarity and to focus exclusively on the distinctive features of each national “character,” since it may be the geological connections that help countries prevent or mitigate future disasters.
- Grinnell students should learn how to understand an issue from the point of view of someone whose home is different than their own. I recently heard a Grinnell student explain the motivations of Somali pirates, who have caused so many problems in the Indian Ocean. Without trying to excuse the pirates, this student noted that the economic and political instability of Somalia lies behind the piracy surge. This is a fine example of how good intellectual work requires one to “put oneself in another’s shoes”—to examine a topic from the perspective of someone whose life experience is significantly different than one’s own. Doing so ultimately brings forth nuanced solutions to problems, e.g. stopping Somali



piracy requires the creation of a functioning Somali state, not just more naval warships policing the high seas. Grinnell graduates don't need to agree with every opinion that they encounter, but they need to learn how different opinions arise and what particular experiences lie behind the perspectives voiced by someone with whom one disagrees.

- Grinnell students should stay engaged with the world long after they have graduated. You may not have access to Rosenfield Symposia or international visiting professors, but you should remain interested in what is occurring in different parts of the world—how people are living their lives, creating new works of art, or responding to problems. Have a passion, and figure how that passion connects you to other people in the world. Because every passion does.

In the end, I suppose a “global” or “international” education at Grinnell is about intertwining the intellectual and ethical dimensions of the self. In order to live a good life, you need to recognize—and seek to understand—the complexity of people, ideas, and natural phenomena that constitute the world. Likewise, in seeking to understand the complexity of the world, you should feel compelled to use that knowledge for beneficial purposes—which can mean simply sharing your knowledge with others. You don't need to “save the world” (such a sentiment has inspired many megalomaniacal tyrants), but you should revere the world's intricacy, and take humble confidence in your ability to create meaning within it.

Hindu Temple Trip

- Sunanda Vaidheesh '12, India

On a nippy spring Saturday morning, decked out in *salwaar kameezes*, *kurtis*, and *kurtas*, six Grinnellians embarked on a trip to the Hindu Temple & Cultural Center in Madrid, IA.

The group of us that went all identify as Hindus, but as we walked around the temple, said our own prayers, and chatted over lunch, I reflected on the wonderful diversity in our understandings and practices of Hinduism. The temple in Madrid is a traditional South Indian temple, familiar to me in its architecture, structure and practices, but quite different from what Biva Rajbhandari '12 encounters when she visits a temple in her home, Kathmandu, Nepal.

We also found that even though the statues and figurines of the various gods and goddesses were familiar to us, visiting a temple in the US is quite a unique experience in itself. For one thing, there are significantly less people in a temple in Madrid, IA than in Tirupati, India (typically visited by about 50,000 to 100,000 people daily). The priests carried out a *puja* (prayer ceremony) for Lord Ganesha, and we later compared the differences in the way pujas are usually conducted in our respective homes in Gujarat, Punjab, Maharashtra, South India, and Nepal.

At the end of the puja, the priests invited us to eat lunch at the temple. Regular patrons of the temple from nearby Ames and Des Moines prepare incredibly tasty Indian dishes every Saturday and bring them here for a community meal. A home-cooked Indian meal was probably the best possible way to cap off this wonderful trip.

We are really thankful to the CRSSJ for providing us with the opportunity to visit a temple in Iowa—a wonderful opportunity and reminder of where we come from and who we are.



Anuraag Bhadana '11, Naina Chhiber '13, Sunanda Vaidheesh '12, Shivani Santoki '11, Biva Rajbhandari '12 & Chinar Verma '13 with the priest outside the temple.

A Visiting Instructor Perspective

- Yu Jiang, Visiting Instructor in Chinese

“If you can speak more than one language you’re multilingual. If you can speak three languages you’re trilingual. If you can speak two languages you’re bilingual. If you can speak only one language you’re an American.” - Author unknown

This is SO not true.

Though, I did have low expectations towards my students when I first arrived at Grinnell as a visiting Chinese instructor, I had low expectations of myself as well. Since this is my first trip to the States, I doubted whether or not I could adapt myself to this Midwestern small town with so few Asian American inhabitants (I browsed local data from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey).

Soon after the semester began, my groundless worries were all gone. Most of my students are experienced language learners (one student can even speak four languages: English, French, Russian and Japanese)! Besides international students (7 out of 42) who were already bilingual, 57% (20 out of 35) of my American students had some language learning experience and 23% of them (8 out of 35) had learned some Chinese in high school. In addition, four students have been to or are going to China with the help of Grinnell’s Study-Abroad program! In a classroom discussion on the topic of “Food”, David introduced the special Chinese food he tasted while traveling to Xiamen and Guangzhou. Kohei, on the other hand, shared with us tips on how to make authentic sushi. Through heated discussions like this, I can strongly feel the participants’ enthusiasm in learning and sharing not only language, but also culture. That is why I no longer worry about my students.

As for myself, Grinnell is already like my second home. My colleague offers me weekly rides to grocery stores. My neighbors drop toys for my daughter. My friends invite me to have dinner at their homes. Even strangers greet me warmly on the sidewalk and chat about their experiences in Nanjing (a lot of people know I am from Nanjing because of the long standing exchange program between Grinnell and Nanjing University). I have become so strongly attached to this place that I even missed Grinnell, instead of my hometown, when I traveled around America during the winter break. This is all because Grinnell is such a tolerant and welcoming space with extraordinary diversity. It is at Grinnell that I first celebrated Diwali and Thanksgiving. It is at Grinnell that I learned what Passover commemorates. It is at Grinnell that I began to add some new food (e.g. American pancakes, served with maple syrup) to my breakfast repertoire (I’ve had porridge and steamed buns as breakfast for over thirty years)!

The world is flat (as Thomas Friedman put it). I am glad that I was more or less internationalized by the internationalism at Grinnell. I’m glad to read from Jacques Steinberg’s report on *New York Times* (Feb. 11, 2011) that Grinnell is still making progress in diversifying the faculty and student body. What is better for me to know, nearly one of every 10 applicants being considered for the class of 2015 is from China. I am sure the diversity in Grinnell will make the students’ stay here a great experience.

I already miss Grinnell (although I won’t be leaving for another two months).

*“There are no trails of the wings in the sky,
while the birds has fled away.” - Tagore*



Yu Jiang, Liu Ce & daughter Malin

Grinnell College has been linked to

China since the early twentieth century, when Grinnell grads went to teach on “Grinnell-in-China.” Since 1987, the College has had an institutional partnership with Nanjing University, one of the top Chinese universities. Every year, Grinnell receives a Chinese instructor from Nanjing as well as two different research scholars (this semester it is Dr. Kong Jianfeng). In exchange, Grinnell sends two faculty a year to teach in Nanjing.

Faculty from every division — including Math, Russian, History, Physics, English, Sociology, and Anthropology—have taught Nanjing University students. This year, Dan Kaiser (History), Barb Trish (Political Science), Philippe Moisan (French), and Claire Moisan (Writing Lab) will be going to teach. Grinnell also gives a four-year scholarship every year to a high school student from Nanjing. Finally, Grinnell sends two graduating seniors every year to Nanjing to teach English, as part of the “Grinnell Corps” program.

From “Grinnell-in-China” to “Grinnell Corps,” the College remains committed to engaging with the world’s most populous nation!

<http://projects.nytimes.com/census/2010/explorer/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/12/education/12college.html>

I am from Burma

- Okkar Kyaw '14, Burma

If you ask me where I'm from, I'll say Burma. Burmese blood runs through my veins as it does with my friends, family and the 50 million other citizens. Since arriving in Grinnell last fall, I've received the same question often: "is it Burma? Or is it Myanmar? What's the difference?" I'll do my best to answer that question.

The name Burma was originally given to the people during the British occupation in 1886. "Burma" derives from the Burmese word "Bamar" which refers to one of the races of Burmese people. The name resembles the independence that we gained from the British occupation. In the hearts of those who have lived and grown up in this place we call home, we're proud to call her Burma.

The official name of my country is now "Myanmar." In 1962 upon the takeover of the military junta, the name was changed. It was under their rule that the rechristening of the capital city from Yangon to Nay Pyi Daw occurred. For many, the changes in names are associated with the start of the dictatorship and years of oppression.

However, across the world "Myanmar" is used to identify us. The United Nations uses Myanmar as does ASEAN. An interesting fact is that the US Government refers to us as Burma. When I was applying for my visa to come to the states, everything on the applications had Burma as opposed to Myanmar. My passport on the other hand has "The Union of Myanmar" on it.

It's difficult to write about Burma today without sharing a bit about our most famous political activist and Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Aung San Suu Kyi. During the protests that occurred in 1988, there was a popular quote that the students chanted which translates as "even after the storm, light will shine upon us." The story of Aung San Sii Kyi has been the light which can guide the Burmese people to freedom. Last fall on November 12, 2010, she was released after 21 years of house arrest. Hope and joy filled the streets of Burma, as Burmese people celebrated on the streets as they warmly welcomed her back. It was devastating for me, being here since I was starting my academic year at Grinnell. I missed a historical event, where thousands of people came together on the streets of Yangon and watched this truly inspiring woman speak. It was a time where everyone could forget about the bloodshed, and come together with thoughts of hope. My dad told me about the loud world cup music playing on the streets as people danced and yelled in unison: "hope!"



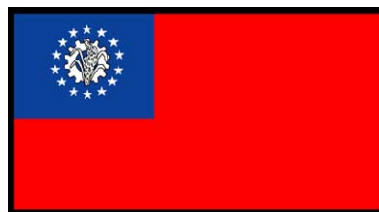
Population: 47,758,181
Area: 678,500 square kilometers
Language: Burmese

Location: Southeast Asia, bordering Bangladesh, China, India, Laos and Thailand.
Capital: Yangon, although Naypyidaw has been the administrative capital since 2006.
Government Type: Military Junta



Thu Htet '14, Hay Mahn Htun '12, and Okkar Kyaw '14, sharing a favorite dish from home during the ISO Food Bazaar.

The Burmese flag was also changed. The reason presented was that astrologers believed that changing in the flag would bring prosperity to the junta rule.



The 14 stars represent our states; the cogwheel with a rice stalk commemorates Burma's agriculture; Red = bravery; Blue=peace; White=pureness



Green = peace, tranquility, and Burma's verdant environment; Yellow = solidarity; Red = valor & decisiveness; White = the consolidated union.

Take a Chance

-David Achio '13, Costa Rica

Chances come and go, that is a fact of life. So, taking the first step is very important especially if this step can get you to places you have never imagined. This is a lesson learned by some of our international students as well, in many situations. For Tolu Alabi '13, from Nigeria, the choice came around twice. Tolu decided to join the basketball team, and then she really decided to join the basketball team.

When Tolu applied to Grinnell, she also looked into becoming a student athlete by establishing contact with the coach. She had been playing basketball for about 2-3 years by then. Transitioning into varsity athletics represented a challenge in terms of the practices, set plays and other technical aspects, but also in terms of the social dynamics associated with team sports. Tolu looks back: "At first I wasn't so close to the team. Sometimes I would see them hang out together and I wouldn't know what they were talking about. I felt really uncomfortable. I never even had dinner with them after practice."

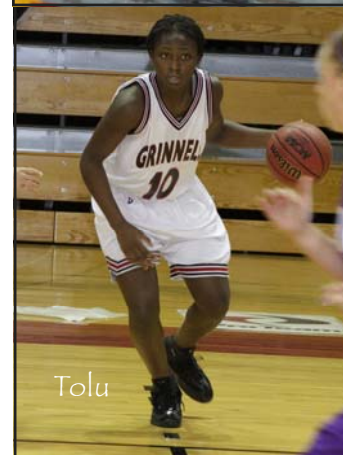
Cultural differences could present a barrier to socialization, team bonding, and the practice of the sport itself. According to Coach Hamilton (tennis), "in a lot of cases our international students come with a sporting background that is more individually developed... for some this is the first opportunity they have to think more of their teammates than of themselves...this is a major opportunity for lifelong bonds, lifelong friendships." Besides reinforcing the group dynamics inherent to team sports, he said coaches sometimes accompany international students in dealing with certain etiquette norms that are new for some of them, like the proper way to address a coach.

Seeing how some of her teammates would approach her and start conversation, helped Tolu realize how nice they really were, and this made her more comfortable around them. "If I compare this season to last season, I feel like last season I wasn't really part of the team. But now I feel like I'm part of the team." Time helped bring them closer, but Tolu said that this change mostly corresponded to a change in her own mentality.

Today, Tolu appreciates how being part of a team has made her a more social person. She says that "without the team, I would just be studying all my life." Knowing all of her new friends, and their families, the chance to travel to new places for games, are part of what Tolu will always remember from her experience with basketball.

The involvement of students in college varsity sport teams is a benefit not only for themselves, but for all those that are involved with the team. Coach Hamilton remarked that international students may have been grateful for the opportunity to play, but he went on to say how rewarding the experience of coaching them has been. He added that their teammates also benefit from exposure to a more global perspective outside the classroom, in long bus rides to games, and in the unique spaces provided by each sport for human interaction.

Tolu is not alone. A number of international students have stepped onto the court, the field, the track or the pool, to take a chance with soccer, tennis, track and field, cross country, volleyball, and swimming. According to Administrative Assistant Nancy Baumgartner the number of international students involved in sports has shown a growing trend over the last few years. These students bring their best game not only into the field but also into the classroom, as several have achieved Academic All-Conference status. The involvement seems to go beyond varsity sports and to include intramural sports and the regular visits to the Fitness Center. International students count as one of the latter one's most assiduous and early visitors, apparently thanks to the encouragement. Hopefully, this trend will keep growing and the school and athletes will continue to benefit from taking more chances.



Photos from Ted Schultz, Sports Information Director.

Summer in the DPRK

- Due to the nature of this article, the identity of the author has been suppressed

I spent my summer in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, also notoriously known as North Korea and affectionately as the Hermit Kingdom. As I stepped out the tiny plane from Beijing to Pyongyang I turned around and found myself being stared at by the huge smiling face of Kim-il-Sung, the former leader of North Korea. His portrait was proudly hanging on the small gray building, also known as their airport. Inside, my passport was inspected by a stern officer dressed in a neatly pressed, military green suit, with an army visor that had a big Communist star gleaming on it. As my parents and I left the airport we drove past little, white shabby houses in the middle of farmland. We drove on leaving my mind to imagine all the wonderful things I could do on a farm for three months...until we drove into the city. My jaw dropped open. The streets were wide and spotless, tall gray buildings with big windows, people waiting in a straight line for the bus without pushing or shoving and there were no traffic jams. On almost every corner there were gigantic colorful murals of Kim-il Sung and his son Kim-Jong-II smiling or holding laughing children.



Propaganda in Pyongyang

In the heart of Pyongyang, stretching into the sky is the monument symbolizing the Juche Idea, an ideology created by Kim-il-Sung which emphasizes the belief that “man is the master of everything and decides everything.” All Koreans are expected to grow up independent, self-sustaining and proud of their country and leader. They express this pride in the form of a small badge with a picture of Kim-il-Sung pinned to their shirts or dresses. As a country run with communist ideals everyone lives in apartments and the supplies are rationed. People are also not allowed to move within the country and must stay in their region.



A Buddhist Temple in Hyangsan.

Over summer I interned at a NGO and taught the national staff English. Their eyes widened when I told them I studied in America and they asked me non-stop questions about slavery and gender inequalities. Being a typical Grinnellian, I made sure we held discussions about history, politics and North Korea's performance in the World Cup. The vast (slightly biased) knowledge that the staff had on countries and events around the world amazed me.

Some weeks I followed my father into different regions of Korea such as Hyangsan and Hamhung. Unlike Pyonyang these regions are politically less strict. Hamhung is located next to the Sea of Japan and has a vast beach where families eat kimchi and grill fresh fish on small bar-b-que sets. Hyangsan on the other hand has lush green mountain ranges. Many people say that the lack of globalization and industrialization in North Korea has helped to preserve the breathtaking forests in Hyangsan. Despite being a strictly secular country there are also still remnants of a colorful ancient Buddhist Temple from before the Korean War.

On my last night, a friend and I went for a night bike ride to the river which ran by the Juche statue. We sat on the steps to the river and talked about the lack of positive international relations of North Korea. Yet as we admired the bright lights on the buildings in front and the lit up Juche Tower behind us I couldn't help but think that there was an eerie and untouched beauty about North Korea. Nevertheless, after a summer of kimchi*, bipimbap**, and anya-as-mikas*** it was a memorable summer filled with people and places I will never forget.

**Kimchi*: traditional fermented Korean dish, made of vegetables with varied seasonings

***Bipimbap*: Dish consisting of a bowl of warm white rice topped with namul (sautéed and seasoned vegetables) and gochujang (chili pepper paste). A raw or fried egg and sliced meat are common additions.

****Anya-as-mika*: “Hello” in Korean

Reflections on Change: *The Middle East & North Africa*



A capacity crowd arrives in ARH on February 3rd to make sense of the historic events unfolding in Tunisia and Egypt: out of the Maghreb (meaning “place of sunset, the west”), Tunisia bursts onto the world stage. A tourist paradise with a French colonial past, basking in jasmine and home to longstanding freedoms for Muslim women, Tunisia leads the way to the Jasmine Revolution and the first in a series of popular uprisings, echoing for some the fall of the Berlin Wall or the global revolution of 1968. The next chapter is also out of the Maghreb: we watch in awe and elation as Egyptians demonstrate and the military breaks rank, moving from “comrades in arms” against the people to “comrades in each other’s arms” in collective embrace. The Facebook/Twitter generation has joined forces against tyrants, repression, and despair. New realities have upstaged the rhetoric of realpolitik and Al-Qaida. Barak “Hussein” Obama (name used in the Arab-Muslim world though rarely in the U.S.!) spoke in Cairo on June 4, ‘08, quoted from the Koran and called for “a new beginning between the U.S. and Muslims” by seeking “common ground.” Can words of friendship help pave the way to a new future? Aftershocks and new fault lines develop as the potential for widespread violence and instability mounts. Shifting sands of N. Africa and the Middle East leave no easy escape routes, the tortuous road to democracy in each country is uncharted, and the threat of chaos grows each day ... and yet, should we not linger just a moment in hope?

Jan Gross, Professor of French

I’ve always imagined that dramatic political change would happen during my lifetime, but I never expected it to be this soon! Tunisians have lived under dictatorship since 1957. We seemed generally satisfied with the government, mainly because of successful economic and anti-terrorism policies. The silence of the people was misinterpreted by our leader and his entourage, as they shamelessly increased their corruption and human rights violations. Many in the West questioned the compatibility of Arab culture with democratic regimes. I am proud and happy that Tunisians could finally get rid of Ben Ali and his government, but I am still concerned about my nation’s future. Ben Ali fleeing the country was a small first step, but building a democracy requires a longer commitment. Democratization will be a painful process, but I remain convinced that we are finally ready and able.

Meriem Trabelsi '13 (Tunisia)



Who could predict this mass activism? These months show that the people are determined to be heard! Most protesters are young people with national and personal aspirations that can’t be achieved under authoritarian and corrupt regimes. They want to be educated, have a reasonable hope for a good future, and be treated with dignity. The people have risked their lives against police forces. They belong to a generation that is more urban, more educated, and more technologically empowered than ever before. Young “cyber activists” have been working together much longer than anyone realized. It started years ago and existed online and out of the world’s view. These brave people are fully aware of their rights and fully aware that change must come from them alone. They have learned from a war-torn Iraq that they are the legislators of their freedom and they don’t need an outside force to pull them out of the deadlock. What comes next is ambiguous, but let’s hope for a prosperous era of social rights, freedoms and democracy!

Olivia Birwari '12 (Iraq/USA)

What is it that binds the different challenges to state authority that we have seen across the Middle East and North Africa? In every case, the contested government emerged either from earlier revolutions, against colonial or colonially-supported authorities, or from international ‘tutelage’ of some kind. We see a tenuous relationship between the state and the broader community, typical of post-colonial regimes across the globe. In part this results from the relative novelty of national life and identity in the region. Just 150 years ago, calling someone an “Egyptian” would have made very little sense. Other national identities in the area are of even more recent vintage. Each of these historically novel communities is in the process of figuring out who it is – how the different pieces of the community fit together, what kinds of desires animate collective life, and how the community should best work toward collective ends. There never really is a moment in which a community fully realizes itself as such – the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion change over time, as do the values that inform collective life. The hope, as expressed by the participants in these uprisings, is that each and every part of these communities has the opportunity to participate in such on-going debates.

Caleb Elfenbein, Assistant Professor of History and Religious Studies



Robin and Lauren, together in Morocco



This is a thrilling time for North Africa, my generation, and the world. I feel incredibly fortunate to be witnessing the unfolding of history so close at hand.

Robin Wetherill '12 (USA, participating in Off Campus Study in Morocco)

I was fortunate to spend a month in Cairo at the ‘beginning’ of the revolution. Though we were stuck in our apartment during the larger protests, we still felt an enormous amount of pride along with our friends and all Egyptians. It was amazing to see this movement develop as quickly as it did, and with such magnitude. It was completely a movement of the people, not any specific group, and no one expected it to become so large. The fact that they achieved their revolution was incredible to witness. Although we were forced

to leave Egypt [the program was evacuated to Morocco] my heart remains in Cairo. It is an amazing place with incredible people that will hopefully receive the treatment they deserve - from their own government and from ours.

Lauren Horn '12 (USA, participating in Off Campus Study in Egypt)

Corruption, poverty, and unemployment plague many African countries. Thanks to an inspirational revolution in Tunisia, sparking protests across the region, citizens are realizing the power they hold to create change. I am proud that our Tunisian brothers and sisters have taken the initiative to protest. Through on-line social networks, information reached thousands quickly. This is the power of technology, and the power that people have to inspire others and to make change. While violence is never desirable, the outcry was necessary to showcase the demand for change. The West often associates Africa with poverty, but the protests have shown the world the real wealth of our people. This was a first-class example of how people exercise control over issues that govern their daily lives. I pray that my Sudanese people can join the revolution and work to improve their lives!

Hiba Elnour '12 (USA, of Sudanese heritage, participating in Off Campus Study in Spain)



More Perspectives

The events in North Africa are a political researcher's paradise. It isn't often that you find objects of study that have so much in common and yet present so much variation. Nations in the region share similar cultures, backgrounds and political systems. They all have reached levels of corruption and inequality that motivate uprisings by their populations. Yet the leadership in each country is reacting so very differently. Tunisia's steady reforms (so far), Egypt's military control and Libya's violent and delusional responses... What accounts for such variation? What we are witnessing will be on academics' minds for years to come, regardless of how the revolutions end. On a personal level, it feels like a roller coaster. One day we are inspired by the enthusiasm and achievements of protesters. Another day we can't help but identify with those who stay silent and inactive in order to save their lives. I'm not sure I can say with confidence which of the two characters I would be, if I were there.

Gemma Sala, Instructor in Political Science

I cannot describe the pride I feel. It was not even in my dreams to live long enough to experience this. It started when my brothers and sisters in Tunisia made their voices heard and prevailed. I was more proud when Meriem Trabelsi responded to my congratulations: "We did not succeed yet, we still have work to do." It was then that I felt that life can be good. If this is how our youth think, then we finally can dream of a future! In the past, when people heard that I am Egyptian, they thought of ancient Egypt. They had every right to. Before 1/25/11, we could offer little more. It hurt me. I am proud of ancient Egypt, but was deeply saddened about the present and the future. Now I am proud and hopeful. I come from Egypt, where people peacefully demonstrate, then clean the square where they demonstrated. I am thankful that I witnessed the day when the world is re-learning how to see us-- inhabitants of the Middle East and North Africa. We have aspirations and will.

I am proud that we are seen for who we are: proud members of the global humanity.

We are no longer a mere tourist destination or an oil well.

Mervat Youssef, Assistant Professor of Arabic

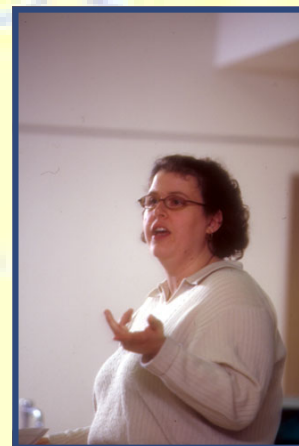


After receiving news of Mubarak's resignation, my mom called, "Sarah, I'm sorry. My generation failed!" Mom wasn't apologizing to me, she was addressing my generation. She was grateful for the revolution and felt regret on behalf of her generation for not freeing Egypt sooner. My generation has achieved what her generation thought was impossible. Over the years I have spoken with Egyptian friends about the possibilities for democracy. Few believed Egypt could change. Few thought we were ready. Egyptian youth were underestimated as lazy, unproductive and careless. But we have shown the world our strength, courage, love and passion. Before the revolution people lived in Egypt, but Egypt did not live in the people. Today we are proud to be Egyptian. This is our beautiful home and we are willing to fight and sacrifice everything for her. Christians and Muslims are uniting, poor and rich are cleaning the streets together, and everyone is showing concern for our country's politics, economics, and social conditions. The '25th of January' revolution's greatest accomplishment is revealing the long hidden beauty of true Egyptian culture.

Sarah P Ghattass '12 (Egypt, currently on Off Campus Study in Denmark)

As a scholar who studies revolutions, it has been extremely interesting to watch protests in North Africa and the Middle East. All revolutions are shaped by the particular historical circumstances during which they take place. It's impossible to know what the future will hold for these countries, but we can be sure that this winter will be a memorable time. Rarely do we live during a period in which we know future historians will look back and identify it as a watershed moment. But that is exactly what the upheaval in Tunisia and Egypt has felt like in the past few months. Great change seems to be lurking, and we will look back to the beginning of 2011 as the start of something significantly new. It's hard not to feel energized and enthused by voices for freedom—no matter what comes next.

Sarah Purcell, Associate Professor of History, Director of the Rosenfield Program



At a protest in 2009 in Tehran, I let it slip, “Iranians sure let others know how they’re feeling!” Someone tapped my shoulder. I whipped around, terrified someone might arrest me, find out I was American, or both. Looking back at me, though, was not a *Basiji* (Iranian paramilitary), but a young woman in a tight knee-length black manteau, Kelly green headscarf, and knockoff Gucci sunglasses. She smiled, her crimson lipstick against her perfect white teeth. “*Azadishooneh*” she breathed, “It’s their freedom.” Before I could process what she said, she melted into the crowd. I was so caught up in MY thoughts and worried about my safety—ideas that made the experience sexy. I had been watching the protests as if they were a movie. What was happening, however, was not a poetic shattering skulls in the name of theocracy but rather a shattering of families, freedoms and human rights. Don’t get me wrong—they had to stand up against tyranny and that’s brave, but as similar situations unfold in the Middle East, don’t get caught up in the drama. Be supportive, don’t be afraid to make a statement, but above all, remember, it’s not for Facebook or Twitter. It’s for their freedom!

Mona Ghadiri ‘11 (USA, of Iranian heritage)

The events in the Middle East are exciting. The people of many of the countries there are acting for the first time to shape their political systems and, in doing so, overthrowing long-standing dictatorships. But, while people in the street can bring down dictators, they can’t, by themselves, create new governments. While we all hope that democracies will emerge from this process, it is more likely that military rule or other forms of dictatorship will arise. It is also inevitable that the unity of the people in the street, a unity focused on getting rid of the dictators, will give way to the divisions and conflicts that are the hallmark of any free political system, but that have been hidden in the efforts to rid these countries of their present dictators.”

Bob Grey, Professor of Political Science

This is, as they say, the “spring of the Middle East and North Africa”. It was high time for the Arab communities to abandon their oppression and change what can be changed. This oppression has been going on for years, and the consequences are the result of decades of silent suffering and autocracy. That’s why every individual, community, country, and union must stand with the Arab World in realizing justice and establishing human rights. Give people in this part of the world the chance to live in proper conditions, at all levels.

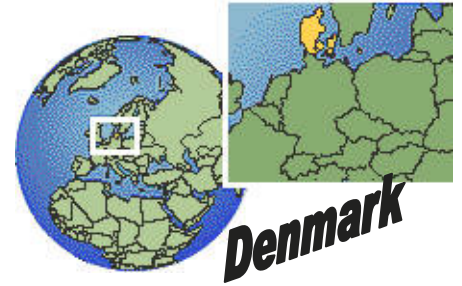
Sahar Jalal ‘14 (Morocco)



Racial Terminology & Cultural Context: The Power of Reflection

-Winnon Brunson Jr. '10, Fulbright Scholar in Copenhagen, Denmark

Living in Denmark has been enlightening and challenging. A couple months ago, a Danish person called me a 'nigger' to describe me to another person. Upon hearing this, I went numb. I had this massive emotional response, but I couldn't figure out how to express it. Maybe it was in jest. Danish humor is very dry and sarcastic. Maybe I could just brush it off and act like nothing happened. Then, one of my Danish friends told me "it wasn't that bad" and that the person "probably didn't mean it in a negative way." While I know he was trying to make me feel better, it felt like throwing salt on a fresh wound.



Danes don't have the same Trans-Atlantic slavery history as whites in the US, but that doesn't make it OK to use the term. Can such a heavy term lose its pejorative connotations in a different cultural context? No one wants to be labeled a racist, a being of hatred, or possibly ignorant. At the same time, no one really wants to be called 'nigger'- a term that labels them as disenfranchised or inferior. Also, Danes pride themselves on their democratic values, and freedom of speech is embedded into the Danish culture. Was I infringing on their cultural values?

I chose to withdraw for a bit and formulate my feelings. After some time, I approached my Danish friends and explained that while 'nigger' may have a less pejorative meaning in Denmark, it's a term that really offends me. We entered into a dialogue about the differences in cultural meanings of the term. Apparently in Denmark, the term 'nigger' is *neger* (nee-er) in Danish, and is sometimes used to describe black people. It is also used by younger kids, but with the intent of only describing the person as a black person and not the pejorative sense of the term.

It was a powerful discussion. Why is it offensive, and how can we make sense of this term considering our different cultural backgrounds? Better yet, I think we reached a better understanding of the impact of using this term, in addition to a few other racially infused terms. We are all socialized differently based on culture, race, language, history, etc.



Originally from St. Louis, MO, Winnon Brunson Jr. graduated from Grinnell in 2010 with a Philosophy major. While at Grinnell, he was a national finalist for the Truman Scholarship, studied abroad in Denmark, and volunteered extensively at Mid-Iowa Community Action. Winnon received a Fulbright Grant to study in Copenhagen for one year following his graduation from Grinnell. He is examining how immigrants access that country's national health care system. Upon returning to the US, he intends to pursue a PhD in public health.

Those differences make it easy to put up barriers to valuable discussions about one's emotional response to bigotry based terms. We can be quick to label someone a racist, without real reflection about what it truly means.

I am not condoning the Danish person's use of the term, rather I am focusing on how I chose to express my reaction to its use. If more discussion would occur between different ethnic groups, we might be more likely to understand how racial or cultural tensions are perceived from multiple directions - by ourselves and by the person accused of being a bigot. Not all race-based remarks are malicious. I might never know if the Danish person who called me a nigger used it in a pejorative manner or just said it out of his own ignorance about what the term means. I could choose to call him a racist, but in the end what will I have really accomplished? What will I have really learned?

I am here to gain a deeper understanding of another culture. I won't agree with everything. I don't have to embrace every practice or belief, but I do have to show respect. Discussing racism and bigotry is difficult because of the feelings involved, but learning to explain our emotions and to articulate our response is even more important.

Interested in learning more about the Fulbright Scholarship and other post-graduate service opportunities for Grinnell Students? Visit the Scholarships & Fellowships section on the Office of Social Commitment's website.



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Hygge

- Paige Hill '12, Acton, MA

Before I went to Copenhagen, I was dreading winter. I wasn't sure if I could manage only seven hours of daylight, or navigate the city on foot and by bus once the snow and cold set in. A few of those fears were actualized. I made my commute in the dark, and watched the faint Scandinavian sunlight flicker past my classroom window in the span of a few short hours. Train delays made me late for practice, and sometimes the cold caused me to put off grocery shopping in lieu of the cous cous and overripe vegetables in my fridge. It was these challenging circumstances, however, that taught me the art of hygge.

Danish hygge has no literal translation in English, but any travel guide or language dictionary will describe it as a combination of "nice" and "cozy." Hygge is a sense of relaxation. It is bundling up, slowing down, and allowing yourself to feel at home in the midst of craziness and uncertainty.

I spent most of my semester on the go: Hours walking around the city getting to know it, exploring parks and gyms, playing frisbee, visiting my "Danish Family" in the suburbs. I spent nights out with friends, and travelled to Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, France, and a few other places. Somehow, through all the hustle and bustle of life in Copenhagen, I learned the art of hygge. In the midst of the Scandinavian winter, my adventures consisted largely of finding a coffee shop or a quaint candle-lit restaurant, and spending the better half of an afternoon nursing a mug of chai or hot chocolate. Even when I was tossed back into the hectic lifestyle of running to the grocery store, darting off to Amsterdam for a weekend, or hurriedly finishing a paper before going out, I carried with me a sense of "hygge."

During my stay in Europe, I had the opportunity to spend a week in Istanbul. I spent countless hours experiencing the busyness of the vibrant city. One evening, my friends and I had the opportunity to go out for tea with two Turkish women. Though we were miles away from my temporary home of Copenhagen, sitting on the tiny benches of the open air café, hunched over candles with our tiny glasses of tea reminded me of the sense of hygge I felt in Copenhagen. I sipped my tea with the locals and felt comfortable opening up to these women and asking them about their experiences being female students in Turkey. I'm so glad I didn't run off to another busy nightclub in the hopes of "experiencing Turkey" and instead made the simple decision to slow down, have some tea, and chat. The real conversations about our perspectives and challenges were among the most significant learning experiences I had abroad.

Perhaps the most important lesson of "hygge" is that sometimes, in order to have the best adventures and absorb the most, you have to find some sense of comfort to bring with you on your journey. Hygge offers a level of comfort with the inevitable ambiguity that is inherent in any new situation. Sometimes in order to let yourself absorb the nuance of a culture, place, or time, you must allow yourself to stay in touch with things that put you at ease. I don't feel like I spent my semester abroad hunkered down in a dimly lit sandwich shop, on a tiny island off the coast of an unimportant country. Instead, it was my willingness to be open, slow down, and be sensitive to my comfort zone that allowed the experience of living abroad to push me toward a more confident and independent version of myself.

Some students who study off campus have the elusive goal to become completely immersed in the culture, and to emulate those native to the area. I discovered that I couldn't "assimilate" all at once, and I had to tackle this challenge in pieces, and sometimes let myself fall back into old habits. I needed to create a little "hygge" in order to make these new experiences more meaningful. I believe that I was successful in gaining a deeper understanding of Danish culture because I brought their "hygge" home with me.

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Paige was one of 18 recipients (among nearly 800 participants) of the 2010 DIS Intercultural Leadership Award.

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The Call of the Berimbau

- Carolin Scholz '13, Germany

“Capoeira, Monday 8-10” my friend’s Facebook status read. Sounds cool, I thought. It was the first time I ever read of anything Martial Art related at Grinnell, and being in need of something non-school related to kill some time and energy, I decided to go check it out!

Something about kicks; the ginga (the basic step for every Capoeira move), followed by esquivas or escapes, got me hooked. I stuck with Capoeira even though Capoeira seemed more complex, more complicated than abstract algebra to me. I was pleasantly horrified when Charlie, Kenji and Tessa (who teach Capoeira at Grinnell) suggested that we should practice Cartwheels!

As I soon learned, Capoeira is not actually a Martial Art. Not exclusively, anyway. Capoeira is much more of a game you play - playfully tricking your opponent in the roda while keeping with the cadence of the berimbau. The word, Capoeira, originates somewhere in 16th century Brazil. The practice of Capoeira draws on a variety of techniques - kicks, escapes (called esquivas) and acrobatic features such as handstands or cartwheels. Even though it is often classified as a Martial Art you don’t ever ‘fight’ your opponent. You ‘play’ your opponent. Cartwheels, handstands, escapes, kicks and ground movements are fair game. The tricky part is chaining the movements together, all while staying with the rhythm dictated by the music, a vital part of Capoeira.

It is as simple as this: no Music, no Capoeira. A good Capoeirista knows his music as well as his movements. In an actual roda, the music is performed live with at least one Berimbau (a music bow instrument), but more likely two or three. There is a drum (called atabaque), a special tambourine (called Pandeiro) and the Agogô (a bell-like instrument). Many Capoeira-songs are a call and response. Usually the person playing the Berimbau calls out and the people forming the roda (not the two playing each other) respond. The Berimbau dictates the cadence, which can go from very slow to very fast. The Berimbau can also deny someone else entrance to a roda.



Grinnell’s Copoeira club has grown significantly in the last year, and more people show up regularly. In the second weekend of February, nine of us traveled to Cedar Falls, Iowa, to attend a Batizado - an event hosted by the local Capoeira schools where its students were given the opportunity to gain their first, or higher cord. We enjoyed several workshops, gained some sore muscles, and had a great time meeting other Capoeiristas and Mestres. Mestres taught the workshops, and of course they also made sure that we knew our place (which is at the bottom of the Capoeira-chain).

I thought Capoeira seemed a bit confusing when I was initially introduced to it, but now I realize that Capoeira is amazingly complex and has a rich culture of its own! It will take years to understand the basics! It was a bit intimidating but it also helped me realize that there is so much more to learn. I won’t be giving up on Capoeira anytime soon.



ISO CULTURAL EVENING

Saturday, April 23, 6:30 pm
Harris Center

Come early if you want a seat!



Zumba: Move the World to a New Beat

- Marlene Jacks, Intercultural Affairs Associate, Office of Diversity & Achievement

Albert “Beto” Perez created this Latin-inspired dance-fitness program in 2001. Zumba Fitness is exhilarating, effective, easy-to-follow, calorie-burning dance fitness-party that’s literally moving over 10 million people of all shapes, sizes and ages. Beto hails from Colombia and his international influence is felt worldwide. By 2005 the Zumba Academy was launched to license instructors to teach classes all over the world. Today, Zumba is taught in over 90,000 locations across more than 110 countries. (www.zumba.com)

The Zumba program intersects generational differences and produces classes for all ages and abilities. The program uses red-hot international music and contagious fitness steps to form a “Zumba Fitness Party!” The steps are a mix of salsa, meringue, reggaeton, bollywood, Afro and Middle Eastern genres. We use the body to sculpt the body.

Intercultural Affairs introduced Zumba Fitness to the Grinnell College campus on Saturday, May 1, 2010, during the spring Selah celebration. We invited Venezuela native & Master Zumba Instructor, Bettina Bolger, to visit the college. Bettina and twenty-five Zumba enthusiasts traveled two hours from Davenport, Iowa to introduce the college community to this active fitness program. The event attracted 95 participants to the first session!

Zumba is a great compliment to Grinnell’s global college environment. Diversity and Wellness have proven to be a very popular combination for growth and personal wellness. Jen Jacobson, Wellness Coordinator, and Greg Wallace, Director of Athletics, have been very supportive of our interest in teaching Zumba here! I am thrilled to teach three individual classes to about 120 students per week. Grinnellians are exposed to fantastic cultural music, global exercise and dance movements, and the attendees burn 650-750 calories per session. The heart healthy classes are geared to help participants get fit, have fun, and gain balance. Of course, light clothing, gym shoes and water bottles are encouraged.

Lastly the most encouraging part of the day is when more faculty and staff members come out and enjoy a heart healthy fitness class together. It builds great community!



Marlene Jacks, Intercultural Affairs Associate, teaches Zumba three times per week.

Marlene’s office is located on the 2nd floor of the JRC, in the Multicultural Suites. She is committed to supporting diversity, as well as working to encourage community members to be healthy - mind, spirit and body.



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“Chai, you take? Two cup chai, you take?”

- Anna-Lisa Bowans '12, while on Minnesota Studies in International Development in India

While at first thought, chai might just seem like a combination of tea leaves, water, sugar and a dash of cardamom, during my semester in Rajasthan, India, I learned that chai is not only a beverage, but rather a tasty tradition symbolizing India's love and hospitality. As people gather for their near hourly chai break, slowly sipping chai and relaxing, families, friends, and strangers get to know one another and perform a symbolic ritual of welcome into their lives and communities.



Drinking chai was a bonding experience for me with nearly everyone I encountered. Each morning I sipped chai with my host mother while we discussed the events in the newspaper, allowing us to connect through political and social discussions.

Each afternoon I drank chai with my classmates while we debated the merits of development and Indian traditions, creating bonds of shared experiences and enabling us to process all that was happening around us. I also drank chai with friendly shopkeepers and when I visited homes of friends and strangers, giving me the ability to discuss all facets of Indian life and make real connections with local Indians in my community. It didn't matter if the sun was so hot my lungs felt sunburned or if I had already had six cups that day, chai was an initiation right into friendship which I could never refuse.

After four months in India I started an internship at Manthan, a rural N.G.O. in Kotri Village. Having come to understand the sacredness of chai during my stay in the city, I should not have been surprised that when I arrived, I had to drink a cup before any introductions were made. As my time in the village wore on, minutes turned into hours of sitting, drinking cup after cup of chai with the Manthan staff and everyone involved in their vision of empowered rural communities, from village midwives, to illiterate villagers, to government teachers. While raising our cups we were all equals; cultural, language and caste barriers seemed to melt away. It was during those long hours of drinking chai that I began to understand the struggles of living with few resources but also the joy that accompanies a simpler life.



In many ways, drinking chai created the time and space for me to ask the questions I had come to India to answer, like how can development be successful? And why is education important? While sipping hot sweet chai, I listened to villagers express their passionate desire for education as a means for carrying on and improving their ancestral ways of life. Frequent chai breaks gave me the opportunity to answer these questions and gain great insights into Indian language, culture and traditions. Certainly, without a taste for chai, I never could have gained such an incredible insight into what being Indian really means.

Masala chai (literally "spiced tea") is a beverage from the Indian subcontinent made by brewing tea with a mixture of aromatic Indian spices and herbs.



GRINNELL SIGHTINGS



Charity Porotesano '12 with her host mom, Doris Calvin



Visiting South African artist, Diane Victor's live demonstration of her smoke medium art



Milton Garcia '14 & David Garwood '13 learn how to make paper snowflakes



Periklis Chatzistavridis '12 with host family friends



Chinar Verma '13 & Austin Redman '12 make chai (tea) for the Wellness Fair



Claire Branigan '11 translating for Carmen Lapacó & Maria Adela Antokoletz during a Rosenfield program event



Xin Jin '12, skiing in Boone, IA over winter break



Huaming Yu '12, recording on his Guqin



Grinnellians offered activities for 40+ local children, during Girl Scout 'Thinking Day'



Liyian Chen '12 in Paris

Snapshots from Abroad!

This space showcases the experiences of Grinnellians participating in study abroad programs. If you are studying abroad and would like to contribute to MOSAIC, please email us your pictures at mosaic@grinnell.edu.



During my 3-day home stay in the rural village of HaMukomo, Limpopo, South Africa, children from the whole village would come to play and listen to our stories after school each day. The home stay was just as new and exciting for them as it was for me, as they rarely have the opportunity to interact face-to-face with a stranger from half-way around the world.

- Melanie Stewart '11
Duke University Organization for Tropical Studies in South Africa

**Organization for
Tropical Studies**

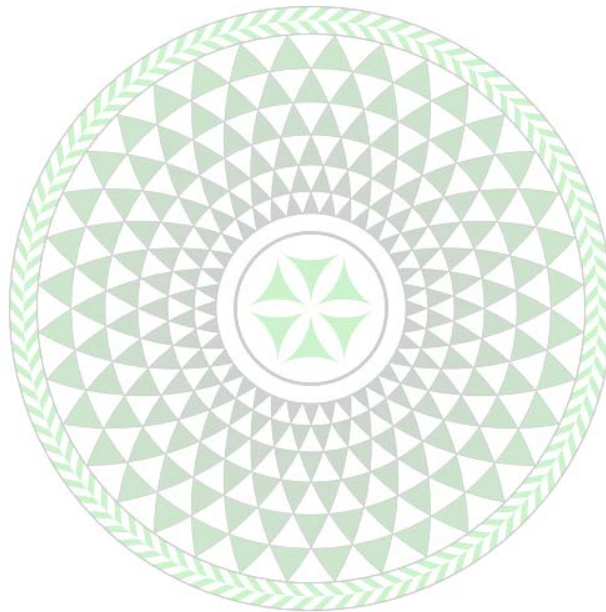
Sunset near Shingwedzi rest camp in Kruger National Park, Limpopo, South Africa. "Sundowners," essentially taking a break from a long day in the field to watch the sunset over a drink and good company, is a tradition of local researchers and one to which I grew quite accustomed.

-Melanie Stewart '11





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A MOSAIC of our Global Grinnell

Mosaic art is created by arranging many small pieces of colored glass, stone or other material in a collage. Our publication celebrates the beauty of a diverse campus and world with a particular focus on the variety of global adventures, here and abroad, that are experienced by Grinnellians.

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