

**LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITY
IN THE DISCOURSE OF AMERICAN
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS STUDYING AT
STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY: A
POSITIONING THEORY ACCOUNT**

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The number of students studying outside of their country of birth is growing rapidly. While the United States of America only sends a small number of students abroad every year, high profile institutions and individuals have argued that studying abroad has become an important developmental experience in the globalized world. This effects (and will continue to effect) countries that send students as well as those that accept such students. While it is recognised that study abroad is both a business and an educational endeavour, the relative importance accorded each facet is disputed by those working and researching in the field. Some argue that to reduce study abroad to a 'business endeavour' would be to remove the quintessential benefits of the experience. Nevertheless, the field (along with all education) is moving to embrace neoliberalisation. Research into the effect of this mass movement is sparse, scarcer still is research into the actual effects on students participating in this movement. This study is an analysis of the linguistic identity construction of American students shortly after a semester abroad at Stellenbosch University. Forty seven surveys were analysed to demonstrate how the way in which students construct their identities is influenced by broader practices in the field. The research shows how identities are co-constructed and suggests that the field of study abroad needs to be critically self-reflective in order to mitigate the potential negative effects of the practices they use.

OPSOMMING

Die aantal studente wat buite hul land van geboorte studeer is vinnig besig om toe te neem. Alhoewel die Verenigde State van Amerika jaarliks slegs 'n klein aantal studente oorsee stuur, beweer hoë profiel institute en individue dat 'n buitelandse studiekeleentheid 'n belangrike ontwikkelingsondervinding is in 'n toenemend geglobaliseerde wêreld. Dit beïnvloed (en sal aanhou om te beïnvloed) beide die lande wat studente stuur en die lande waarnatoe die studente gestuur word. Hoewel dit algemeen erken word dat 'n buitelandse studiekeleentheid beide 'n besigheid en 'n opvoedkundige aangeleentheid is, betwyfel navorsers en die wat in die praktyk werk die mate waartoe beide aspekte bydra tot die praktyke wat gebruik word. Sommige beweer dat om 'n buitelandse studie geleentheid te reduseer tot 'n besigheidsaangeleentheid, die ervaring van sy wesentlike voordele ontnem. Ten spyte van die kritiek word toenemend meer waarde geheg in die veld van 'buitelandse studie geleenthede' (saam met ander opvoedkundige kontekste) aan neoliberalisme. Navorsing wat die invloed van neoliberalisme op onderrigpraktyke ondersoek is raar, nog raarder is navorsing wat die effek van neoliberalisme op studente ondersoek. Hierdie studie analiseer die linguistiese identiteitskonstruksie van Amerikaanse studente kort na hul 'n buitelandse studiekeleentheid van 'n semester by Stellenbosch Universiteit voltooi het. Sewe en veertig opnames is geanaliseer om te demonstreer hoe die manier waarop studente hul identiteit konstrueer deur die praktyke in die veld beïnvloed word. Die studie dui aan dat identiteite saam gekonstrueer is en beveel aan dat die veld van 'buitelandse studiekeleenthede' krities en self-reflektief moet wees om potensiële negatiewe effekte van die praktyke wat gebruik word teen te werk.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and rationale

Globalisation has become such a reality that few areas of human existence have escaped it. ‘Globalisation’ has also become such a common term that a nuanced understanding has been lost, giving over to a more resilient, simple definition. Hall, in the early days of academic interest in globalisation, caught the subtlety in the following way:

“Globalisation is the process by which the relatively separate areas of the globe come to intersect in a single imaginary ‘space’; when their respective histories are convened in a time-zone or time-frame dominated by the time of the West; when the sharp boundaries reinforced by space and distance are bridged by connections (travel, trade, conquest, colonization, markets, capital and the flows of labour, goods and profits) which gradually eroded the clear-cut distinction between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’.” (Hall 1995:271)

Hall’s use of ‘intersect’, ‘convened’, ‘bridged’, and ‘connections’ displays well the understanding that globalisation both unifies its concerns into a single, collapsible ‘space’ whilst at the same time being aware of the different localities of its disparate concerns. Cultures, identities and knowledge that already existed in the world, have become more accessible during this globalisation phase. Hoppers (2009:301-602) echoes this idea, showing that rather than pushing marginal systems further into the periphery, globalisation can have the effect of pulling the edge into the centre and setting up a clash of people’s individual and social identities. It is perhaps worth noting that while technological advances have increased accessibility to diversity, this access is still not (and may never be) uniformly available – ‘globalisation is a spatially and socially uneven process’ (Oakes and Price 2008: 255). Thus there are dimensions both of homogeneity and heterogeneity in a nuanced view of globalisation.

At the same time though, views are not always nuanced and discourses around concepts can calcify those concepts. It is very well to acknowledge Foucault's (1980:81) proclamation that we are witnessing an 'insurrection of subjugated knowledges' but one should not take an insurrection to be the dismantling of an hegemonic system. Fairclough (2006:39-63) shows that despite the number of discourses (among them, previously subjugated knowledges) surrounding globalisation, a dominant representation has arisen:

“‘Globalism’ is a discourse of globalization which represents it in reductive neo-liberal terms within a strategy to inflect and re-direct actual processes of globalization in that direction.”
(Fairclough 2006:40)

Oakes and Price (2008:254) too, point out that globalisation is 'sometimes approached as a largely economic phenomenon, enacted by corporations...'. This view on globalisation is supplemented by Hall (1995:271) who shows how globalisation is tainted by the long sordid history of colonialism of the West; the extraction of people and resources, the imposition of values and norms, and the destruction of entire cultural groups. Similarities between colonial and corporate modes of operation (e.g. the extraction of resources, the insistence of a single system) are well known, leading to a view that globalisation brings what Zayani (2011:48) calls 'the threat of cultural standardisation'. The media, in particular, have seized the word 'globalisation', using it to mean something roughly synonymous with 'Americanization' or at least 'standardisation'. It is clear then that 'globalisation' as a concept is contested. The situation that arises is one in which various role players try and stabilise their interpretation at the expense of others'.

Globalisation has become a focal area for current academic research. As Sheller and Urry (2006:207) show, various disciplines within the social sciences have contributed to an entirely new paradigm to deal with the rapidly increasing number of people moving around the world. Vertovec (2007) has similarly argued that such is the number and diversity of people moving

around the world, a whole array of new techniques, concerns, and focus areas for academics has arisen. The fields of International Education (the people and practices of all education that crosses national borders) and Study Abroad (the people, programs and groups involved in 2 week to 1 year academic programs established to allow students to *temporarily* move to a new country and university) have been especially effected by the discourses surrounding globalisation, as they have only come into their professionalization phase concurrent to the above-outlined changes (Keller and Frain 2010:39).

The emergence of ‘globalisation’ as a buzzword and an ever-present reality through the 1990s has been consistent with an increase in study abroad numbers as well as activated academic interest in the new questions posed by this mobility. The Institute of International Education and The Forum on Education Abroad (2010b:1) estimates that after decades of growth and a short downturn owing to the last economic recession, study abroad numbers are rebounding to over 260,000 United States students abroad a year. Urban and Orbe (2007:117-118) predict that by 2025 there will be seven million international students worldwide. This rapid growth has vitalised academic interest in International Education (IE) and Study Abroad (SA). The field has seen at least three dedicated academic journals established in the past two decades: *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* (1994), the *Journal of Studies in International Education* (1997) and the *Journal of Research in International Education* (2002).

That globalisation and study abroad are tightly connected is, by now, no longer a contested point. Keller and Frain (2010:41) have shown that the study abroad field in America now focuses on globalisation as a way to prepare American students “to learn how to navigate a flat world in which it was no longer a given that the United States was the unquestioned hegemonic world power.” But to what form of globalisation is the field bound? The executive

summary from the very important Lincoln Commission¹ is highly instructive. The Commission proposed increasing the number of American students studying abroad to one million within ten years. Under the sub-heading “Globalization and economic competitiveness”, the following appears:

“It is no secret to anyone that the United States is buffeted by international forces. Our *economic, military, and diplomatic challenges are global in nature*. Modern technologies, communications, and transportation systems have *remade manufacturing and distribution* on a global scale. *American corporations understand the importance of these issues*. Increasingly, business leaders recognize that they must be able to draw on people with global skills *if their corporations are to succeed* in a world in which *one American job in six is tied to international trade*.” (Italics added, Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program 2005:v)

Even though the Paul Simon Foundation Act (2007)² which arose from this Commission failed to be passed into law, it has been seen as highly important to pursue the ideals within it (Keller and Frain 2010:44-45). Talk in the field about ‘selling’ programs and dealing with ‘customers’ is now the norm. As demand for ‘the study abroad experience’ increases, so do sales pitches and marketing. This is congruent with the general move in higher education and elsewhere to knowledge as commodity and, therefore, a knowledge-based economy (Castells in Botman 2011:3).

The full impact of this commodification of knowledge is an area that is to date under-explored, particularly with regards to IE and SA (although cf. Agbaria 2009, Naidoo 2003, Simandiraki 2006). Another area that remains surprisingly untouched is research on American international students. This is odd considering the great importance Americans are placing on

¹ In the early years after the events of September 11th 2001 there were calls to curtail “America’s ignorance of the world [as it had become] a national liability” (NAFSA 2003:iv). NAFSA established a task force on the value of education abroad. The report of the task force (ibid.) unsurprisingly recommended a “national effort to promote study abroad”. Following this report, the U.S. Congress subsequently approved the establishment of a Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program to further investigate the need for large scale American involvement in Study Abroad.

² The Act was proposed in the U.S. Senate as a modified version of the Lincoln Commission’s report. (Keller and Frain 2010:44)

internationalisation. Much more of the literature focuses on international students at Western universities, chiefly in Australia (cf. Fincher and Shaw 2011, Kashima and Loh 2006, Koehne 2005, Koehne 2006, Sawir, Marginson, Deumert, Nyland, and Ramia, 2007), the UK (cf. Brown 2009a, Brown 2009b, Habu 2000, Janes 2011, Ramachandran 2011) and the United States (cf. Kim 2011a, Kim 2011b, Lee and Rice 2007, Sherry, Thomas, and Chui 2009, Tubin and Lapidot 2008, Urban and Orbe 2007). Research on American students studying in Africa is rare and just a single piece of published research has been conducted on American international students in South Africa (Mathers 2008).

Stellenbosch is a good location in which to study the non-western context. Though on the surface Stellenbosch may look like a highly westernized town, such a view would be ignoring that

“Stellenbosch is an area where great wealth in the form of wine estates, luxurious hotels, spas and leafy green suburbs exist side by side with impoverished farm workers, displaced farm dwellers, and unemployed and poor households resident in underdeveloped townships situated beyond the main industrial, commercial, entertainment areas and spaces of leisure.” (Stellenbosch Municipality 2010:16)

There must be the recognition that Stellenbosch is not only a developed town, but also suffers in the shared African colonial history – and as such is distinctly non-Western.

This thesis contributes to two main issues. Firstly, it will investigate the experiences of American international students outside of a Western context. Secondly, it will consider the impact of globalisation on American students participating in Study Abroad.

The central ideas of this thesis stem from my work with American international students enrolled for a semester of study at Stellenbosch University. As an advisor, part of my role is to assist the students to understand, and adapt to, their new situation. Their explorations are varied, as are the skills and knowledge they acquire while in South Africa. While frameworks

exist that have isolated relevant factors in sociocultural adjustment (cf. Ward and Kennedy 1999), they deal with items such as “making friends”, “local transport”, and “dealing with unsatisfactory service”. This, I believe, provides only a rough guide to what experiences may cause stress in international students. In short, what does having trouble with “making friends”, “local transport” and “unsatisfactory service” tell us about underlying factors in the experience of the students?

Aside from a theoretical interest, I have a practical interest in the issues investigated in this study. As of the latest figures available, international students comprise fully 11% of the Stellenbosch enrolment (Stellenbosch University 2011). This is up from 4% in 2000. Although internationalisation is not an explicitly stated goal, it can be inferred from the increase in numbers that internationalisation is important to the university. If the numbers are increasing, then the service and advice dispensed need to be improving too. If international educators/study abroad advisors need to help students gain knowledge of, and adapt to, the new culture, then it follows that those professionals need themselves to have the knowledge and skills required (cf. Paige and Goode 2009:340). This thesis provides a contribution to the knowledge base.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

I make extensive use of critical discourse analysis (CDA) in this thesis. More specifically, I make particular use of ‘positioning theory’. The decision to do so is informed by a number of insights provided by other authors’ research in the field of study abroad.

Firstly; Simandiraki (2006:49) has outlined the tensions that underlie the relationship between international education and cultural heritage. These tensions are created by an opposition between the “dogmatic dimension [that] is inherent in education” and the diversity of cultural heritage. She (2006:50) highlights the danger in ignoring this tension; “international education in relation to cultural heritage is always in danger of remaining a supra-national nationalist

endeavor.” The insight here is that the relationship between culture and IE is not as simple as many claim it to be. IE is not just a link to cultural understanding but also a potential danger. This means that the field of international education should be self-critical in the way it presents itself (cf. Woolf 2010). By extension, any research concerning IE should be critical of the relationship between the practitioners, their students and the cultures these students are supposed to learn about.

Secondly; Urban & Orbe (2007:118), in a study on international students’ communicative experiences, have noted that similar studies have “failed to recognize (and examine) the degree to which international students were situated – through language, physical appearance, labels, and the like – as cultural outsiders, and how this social positionality impacts their communicative experiences.” Their aim is to pay attention to the way in which power dynamics effect the experiences of international students. Considering the centrality of globalisation in SA practices, this becomes an important insight; positionality and power are important concerns when dealing with group interaction.

Thirdly; Koehne (2005:104) has warned against treating international students as “an entity, rather than as individuals with a range of personal histories and experiences, and a range of personal motivations and desires which have constructed the desire to become an international student.” However, she has noted (Koehne 2006:243) that “[d]iscourses have relations of power and knowledge within them that can limit subject positions that are made available, that are possible to say about oneself.” In other words, international students are exposed to and utilise (and/or are positioned by) various discourses. Discourses therefore become an integral part of understanding each individual international student as well as the ways in which discourses may be repeated, reused or resisted by a number of international students.

The three insights above can be summarised as follows; IE is not just a conduit to acculturation and should therefore be critically appraised. The ways in which people are

positioned (or position themselves) is an important facet in intercultural contact. This includes ways in which IE itself positions students. Power is an important concept when working with interacting groups as positions may be limited depending on the availability of power. Discourses are dialectically related to the student's social position and as such may contain important information regarding the subject's experience. As CDA is concerned with the interaction between discourse and the social (power), it proves an applicable tool for the current project.

I agree with the fundamental claims of contemporary linguists such as Fairclough (2006) and Pennycook (2004). Broadly speaking, both theorists can be described as social constructivists. They believe that 'objects of enquiry' are socially constructed, reproduced, crystallized and contested by various social actors. This follows the post-structuralist turn in rejecting the essentialist view of the world. Pennycook (2004:7) argues for the need to "develop an anti-foundationalist view of language as an emergent property of social interaction and not a prior system tied to ethnicity, territory, birth, or nation." Fairclough (2006:12) rejects "positivist accounts of economic and social facts which exclude their social and discursive construction..."

In the case of this thesis, my objects of enquiry are identities. Identities are emergent, fluid, and dependant on a number of key contextual factors. As Lemke (2008:19) puts it; "[w]e are always ourselves, but who we are, who we portray ourselves as being, who we are construed as being changes with interactants and settings, with age of life."

I take the view that the use of language is one of the main ways in which people construct their identities. However, if we understand that our identities are fluid, then our understanding of language use must be that it is used fluidly too. As Cameron (2001:145) points out: "talk is always designed by those who produce it for the context in which it occurs." Cameron's statement highlights two important points: firstly, talk is designed or constructed and;

secondly, specific construction matches specific context. The second point is perhaps more crucial in that it is somewhat more complicated than it first appears. If discourses appear differently in varied social situations, then it follows that social positions (identities) and relationships (between two or more identities) differ and are sometimes unequal. Therefore, as Cameron (2001:161) observes; “Discourse (language in use), then, is a resource for understanding how identity and difference, or/and dominance, are constructed...”. This recognition of the interplay between language, power and identity has important implications for any researcher who attempts to deal with any of the three as they must be dealt with together.

Consequently, it is my view that CDA is the most effective tool to understand this interplay. Fairclough (2006:9) notes that CDA is “an area of interdisciplinary research and analysis... and now includes a number of different approaches”. The common concern facing all of these approaches is to give discourse a prominent position, showing it to be an important facet of social life. The relationship between discourse and the social is not a simple relationship either as it is not only a facet of social life but also informs and is informed by other facets of social life (e.g. Fairclough *ibid.*).

The particular critical approach I adopt is positioning theory as proposed by Davies and Harre (1990) and developed by, amongst others, Tan and Moghaddam (1995), Pavlenko (2001 and 2007), Bamberg (e.g. 2004), and Barkhuizen (2009). Pavlenko (2001:322) views positioning as “the process by which individuals are situated as observably and subjectively coherent participants in story lines.” Harre, Moghaddam, Cairnie, Rothbart, and Sabat (2009:5-8) state that positioning theory “is concerned with revealing the explicit and implicit patterns of reasoning that are realized in the ways that people act towards others” and that positions are “constituted by assigned, ascribed, claimed, or assumed rights and duties to make use of the available and relevant discursive tools.”

My own use of positioning can be summarized as follows. People are participants of various groups in society. As part of these groups they are afforded rights and duties by their positions in these groups. It follows that their rights and duties differ according to which group they are presently interacting within. They adopt, whether implicitly or explicitly, rights and duties in part by use of various discursive practices. These discursive practices partly shape and are shaped by other facets of social life. Through analysing the ways people position themselves in discourse, one can analyse content, form, and context (Barkhuizen 2009:282; Pavlenko 2007).

Following Pavlenko (2001), I consider whether students position themselves in terms of a) linguistic, b) national, racial, and ethnic, c) cultural, d) gender, and e) social and class identities. Following Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008), I look for ‘small stories’ that arise in the text. These small stories are used to supplement, by introducing previously overlooked data, the larger stories which are traditionally used in narrative research. Furthermore, the consideration of context will play an important role in understanding why students may position themselves in those ways. The context pertinent to this analysis is the interaction between globalisation and the field of study abroad and how this interaction impacts on the experience of students.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Numerous studies have been conducted on the experiences of study abroad students in Western countries. Very few have focused specifically on Westerners in non-Western countries. Past studies have suffered additionally from two deficiencies: firstly, by not recognising the role the field of international education plays in some of the experiences of international students; and secondly, by not recognising the constructed and fluid nature of identity. This thesis will investigate the effect of a study abroad experience in Stellenbosch, South Africa on the constructed identities of American students. Paying close attention to

context, it will investigate the ways in which students position themselves and others, thereby constructing their identities. This thesis will thus operate on two levels; investigating the effect of intercultural contact on student identities, as well as investigating to what extent the manner in which IE professionals' conduct their work (the way in which international education is conducted), effects student identities.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions will be investigated:

- i. To what extent do American students draw on discourses of identity to articulate their experiences in South Africa?
- ii. How do these students position themselves and others in terms of:
 - a. Linguistic identities
 - b. National, racial, and ethnic identities
 - c. Cultural identities
 - d. Gender identities
 - e. Social and class identities
 - f. Other identities
- iii. To what extent does the local context influence the students' identities?
- iv. To what extent can the students' use of these identities be attributed to the influence of the practices of contemporary study abroad?

1.5 Research aims

This research aims to discover:

- i. The extent to which American students draw on discourses of identity to articulate their experiences in South Africa.

- ii. The various ways in which students position themselves and others.
- iii. The extent to which the local context influences student identities.
- iv. The extent to which the practices of contemporary study abroad influence student identities.

1.6 Research hypothesis

The study takes the following hypotheses as its point of departure:

- i. Because of extant scholarship, it can be surmised that the majority of students will draw on discourses of identity to articulate their experiences in South Africa.
- ii. Because of individual agency and different experiences and backgrounds, students will position themselves and others variously, though some commonalities in theme may emerge.
- iii. Because of similar scholarship, it can be surmised that the local context will have a significant impact on the construction of student identities.
- iv. The nature of study abroad and the way it is practiced will play an important part in how students construct their identities.

1.7 Research design

The data

The data used in this study will be taken from the archive of the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE). CIEE is a non-profit international exchange provider which offers numerous study abroad programs in 42 countries around the world. The author works for the CIEE Stellenbosch Study Center (hereafter, the Program) and as such has access to, and permission to use, the survey all students are requested to complete upon departure. The

Program admits two cohorts per year, the first in January (referred to as the ‘Spring’ group) and the second in July (the ‘Fall’ group). Participants in the Program are allowed to comment on various aspects of their experience anonymously. Surveys from all groups during the period January 2009-July2011 will be used, totalling 6 sets of surveys and 46 respondents out of a possible 51.

The participants

All the participants were, at the time of the survey, studying towards a Bachelors degree at a United States tertiary institution. They had just completed, or were about to complete, a Study Abroad semester. Out of the possible 51 responses, there were 50 individuals as one student decided to stay for another semester. The students during the period abroad comprised 48 U.S citizens, 1 English citizen and 1 Mexican citizen. Because of the aforementioned anonymity, there is no way to know who the 46 respondents were. However, at least 44 of 46 (96%) are American citizens.

Data Analysis

Data analysis will comprise a critical discourse analysis of the in-survey narratives of the experiences of American international students. I will proceed according to the suggestions of Pavlenko (2001, 2007), Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) and Barkhuizen (2009) who all use positioning theory (albeit slightly variant forms) as an analytical tool. Accordingly the focus will be on three interrelated concerns; content, form and function. As a preliminary step, the data is coded according to themes. These themes comprise various types of identities (e.g. ethnic, national, social) held important to the respondents. I will then perform positioning analyses on three individual survey responses to demonstrate the major themes in order to refine the theme selection. I then move on to a collective positioning analysis that proceeds at three levels, namely: 1) in-story content and positions, 2) narrator-audience content and positions, and 3) the meta-positions that can be synthesised using levels 1 and 2.

1.8 Chapter outline

Chapter 2: *Study abroad practices and contexts* provides a brief history and contextualisation of study abroad, especially as practiced by practitioners in the United States of America. The ideological assumptions of, and current practices in, the field are critically discussed. This serves to provide a conceptual overview of the field which is important to the data analysis.

Chapter 3: *A theoretical introduction to the (linguistic) construction of identity* provides an overview of various approaches to identity. However, the focus is on a social constructivist account of identity and particularly on the use of language to construct identity. This serves to locate a theoretical framework within which to work.

Chapter 4: *Research design and methodology* explains the research procedures, instruments of data collection, and decisions involved in this work. The use of narrative as site of identity construction and positioning as analytical tool are also addressed.

Chapter 5: *Constructing identities – the discursive practices of respondents* examines the ways in which the respondents construct their various identities. Constructions common to many respondents are considered in relation to current contexts in study abroad.

Chapter 6: *Conclusion and recommendations* considers what can be learnt from the respondents' identities. It provides recommendations for further study as well as practical suggestions concerning the field of study abroad.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY ABROAD PRACTICES AND CONTEXTS

Although Study abroad (SA) has only become established as a research area during the 1990s, scholars have claimed long historical roots for SA. Burn (1985:48), for example, traces the field's history in the "wandering gurus of Asia and India", such medieval universities as were located in Bologna, Paris and Oxford (cf. also Altbach 2002:30), and the tradition of the Grand Tour undertaken by well-heeled English graduates. Though the validity of these assertions is not to be argued here, Burn's views in particular highlight the triumvirate of knowledge, education, and travel; so important to the project of SA. This triumvirate constitutes a typical lay response when encountering study abroad.

Defining 'study abroad' is complicated by a number of factors. Firstly, 'study abroad' in its current use means something very different to 'international education', even though the two are more often than not mentioned together. This is not a true conflation of the two notions but rather a remnant which points to shared roots. 'International Education' has developed a broader, more fragmented meaning. Simandiraki (2006:35) has noted that 'international education' has various definitions and that while academics and practitioners involved in the field may understand the field as a whole, a unitary definition may elude us for now. For the purpose of this paper, it suffices to say that 'international education' is a term used in an ad hoc manner to refer to the field as a whole or to elements within the field. Simply put, it has become a catch-all term for anything to do with both things 'international' as well as 'educational' (cf. Simandiraki 2006:35-38 for a discussion on this point).

Study abroad can in many ways be seen as a task or project of international education. Dutschke (2009:67) goes so far as to call study abroad a manifestation of international education, along with "foreign language studies, discipline and area studies... student

exchanges, and international research.” I define ‘Study Abroad’ for the purposes of this research as the programs and processes by which tertiary education students spend time studying overseas for academic credit, and for individual and cultural growth. Study abroad is proclaimed to be an academic, as well as a developmental experience³.

That study abroad is ‘about culture’ is no longer (if it ever was) a contested point. Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, and Lassegard (2002:4) summarise the fact thus: “Learning both the language and the culture(s) of the host country will help your students make the most of their study abroad experience.” In fact host country language and culture is deemed so important that language learning is often a key part of academic requirements and intercultural adjustment is taught and tested whilst studying abroad. Study abroad is declared to be about learning and developing but globalisation has been affecting the field for some time now.

Studying abroad is a worldwide activity involving over 3.3 million students a year (OECD 2010:1). As with many things when considered on a global scale, study abroad is spread very unevenly across the world. Asia sends almost 50% of all students studying abroad in OECD countries while North America sends just 3.7%. The USA, however, leads the pack in terms of incoming study abroad students, hosting almost 725000 in 2010/11 (Institute of International Education 2011a:1). Numbers of students going to so called ‘non-traditional’ destinations in Africa, Asia and the Middle East are low but increasing (Institute of International Education 2011b:1). While the spread of study abroad participants and sending countries is irregular, focus on a particular area can nevertheless prove valuable. The recent history of American participation in study abroad provides an instructive example of some common processes involved in international study abroad.

³ See section 2.1. for evidence for this definition.

2.1 Study abroad – a brief history of the American perspective

The contemporary history of study abroad, as it is understood today, is usually seen by American practitioners to encompass the past 75 years (Council on International Educational Exchange 2006:1). In short, SA during this period can be summarised as becoming a part of the maintenance of America's stature in the world. As NAFSA (2003) so bluntly states; "Securing America's Future: Global Education for a Global Age". In many ways, American investment in SA has always been partially about the country's best interest as well as fulfilling an educational and cultural mandate. Keller and Frain (2010) mark the cold war period (the 1940s) as the major turning point in the coupling of SA and geopolitics⁴. They (2010:19) describe the situation during the Cold War period as "[t]he expansion of the study abroad model to encompass geopolitical considerations..." This author, while in general agreement, considers geopolitical considerations to have been present (implicitly) earlier in the history of American SA. One key development in the field of study abroad was the establishment of the Institute of International Education (IIE)⁵.

At the end of World War I, many people around the world recognised the importance of dialogue and understanding as the way to prevent another conflict at this scale. In 1919, three men founded the IIE. They were: Stephen Duggan, Sr., a Professor of Political Science; Elihu Root, a former United States Secretary of State; and Nicholas Murray Butler, who was the Republican nominee for the national Vice Presidency in 1912. These men believed that they "could not achieve lasting peace without greater understanding between nations—and that international educational exchange formed the strongest basis for fostering such

⁴ Østerud (1988) has shown how difficult it is to define "geopolitics". In Keller and Frain (2010), it is used simply to indicate political strategy which is informed and shaped by tensions arising from different locations and nations.

⁵ The IIE is an important international education organisation with links to the U.S. State Department. It operates out of 18 international offices. It administers many different prestigious programs and awards including the Fulbright Program and the Ford International Fellowships Program. In addition it provides training and produces research for the field.

understanding.” (Institute of International Education 2011a) This link between the political and educational is made explicit here.

In the aftermath of World War II, the need for greater understanding was reiterated. A number of new developments arose with regards to SA. Most important in this period was the passage of the Fulbright Act (1946). This Act engendered the Fulbright program. This program, at least officially, is concerned with the "promotion of international good will through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture, and science." (U.S. State Department 2010) However, Keller and Frain (2010:17) have described the origins of the program as an “American counterpoint to the Communist politico-cultural campaign.”

The Fulbright-Hays Act (1961) was an extension to its progenitor and had the following purpose:

The purpose of this chapter is to enable the Government of the United States to *increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange*; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations, and the *contributions being made toward a peaceful and more fruitful life* for people throughout the world; to *promote international cooperation for educational and cultural advancement*; and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world. (Emphasis added. The United States of America 1961)

This section of U.S law highlights how international education is central to American interests. An Act concerning education is also explicitly about the U.S. image on the global stage.

Keller and Frain (2010) have covered the period from 1965 onwards extensively. They have highlighted, amongst other things: the strengthening of international education legislation

during the Vietnam War (p.26); concerns about the CIA funding international educational organisations like the IIE (p.28); a decrease in study abroad enrolments during U.S.-Soviet tensions of the Cold War (p.30-31); the increasing salience of globalization in SA during the 1990s (p.39); and finally, globalisation as the new unifying principle for SA in the 2000s p.(40-50).

2.2 Tensions between globalisation and neoliberalism

Globalisation necessitates the re-examination of SA. In the American context, which is of central concern here, Keller and Frain (2010:48) have argued that the United States

“will have to define its national security interests more broadly than in the past. In this redefinition, America’s soft power, within which study abroad and other global educational programs play important roles, will undoubtedly become even more salient components in the nation’s relationship to geopolitics.”

Keller and Frain see SA as being a part of America’s soft power, a tool or instrument to further U.S interests in the world. While this, in itself, is not as controversial as one might think, it has interesting implications when understood in broader contexts. It is now clear that SA is participating in the rhetoric of the global economy. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (2011), recently argued that in order for the United States to maintain its status as global higher education leader, “[Americans] must push [them]selves to not just think globally, but to get out there and study globally as well.” It is no longer good enough that cultural understanding contributes to peace or individual development, but rather culture itself has become a ‘resource’ to be bought and sold in the global economy.

At the same time, the repeatedly *stated* goals of study abroad include: to enable ‘exploration of a different culture’, to ‘improve intercultural knowledge and skills’ and to create ‘global citizens’. The websites of the following prominent American IE and SA interest groups have the following to say: “by bringing people and experiences together, we bring the world together.” (American Institute of Foreign Study); “to help people gain understanding, acquire

knowledge, and develop skills for living in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world” (Council on International Educational Exchange); “promoting international understanding and global learning” (International Study Exchange Provider); and “preparing the next generation with vital cross-cultural and global skills” (NAFSA). Students and practitioners alike assume they will learn these skills and knowledge and become a ‘global citizen’.

The first problem that is encountered here is the difficulty in reconciling the notion of SA as a vital part of American soft power with the understanding of SA as helping to bring peripheral cultures and knowledge into the global fold. To summarise ‘soft power’, one can follow Nye (2004:3) in stating that it is, simply, “attractive power”. Attraction to American cultural values, modes of consumption and ways of being can be seen as an effect of America’s soft power. If the intention is to attract the world to American values, then it follows that those values must be held up as ‘better’ or ‘correct’. How does one reconcile this ethnocentricity with cultural equality and difference?

The second problem follows from the first. What happens when ethnocentric discourses interact with neoliberal consumer discourses (as both are present in the discourse of SA)? If, as the old saying goes, ‘the customer is always right’⁶ and the customer is ethnocentric, then how can the customer ever come to accept other cultures on their own terms and as equal to theirs? This is especially true if they aren’t even given (or take) the opportunity to interact deeply with culture. As Simandiraki (2006:47) argues; “if... international education is of a globalist nature – in the sense of aiding prowess in the global job market – then cultural heritage used therein tends to be the stereotyped ‘cultural fossil’ assortment convenient for that process.” These ‘cultural fossils’ are antithetical to the project of study abroad. A couple of observations will now be made in order to clarify some of the preceding issues.

⁶ Franz (1998:1) points out several other dangerous catchphrases: “the customer is king”, “customer-focused service”, “customer-driven marketing”, and “customer-based quality”.

Firstly, Vande Berg (2009:816) has experienced that “too many [students] were not having the sort of experience US educators expected and wanted them to have.” One of the important conclusions Vande Berg (2009:820) has drawn from his study on student learning abroad is that “far too many of the study’s students, when left to their own devices, failed to develop effectively, even when they had been ‘immersed’ in another culture.” Vande Berg concludes on an important note:

“When students return home without having met their or the program’s goals, those who organized the program do not assume that the students are at fault. While that may be the case, they are also aware that adjustments may need to be made – in the program’s design, in its delivery, in the selection and preparation of students, or in all three – so that future program participants will be more likely to succeed.” (Vande Berg 2009:826)

Secondly, Woolf (2010:59) has argued against the continued rhetoric of ‘globalisation’ and ‘global citizenry’ in the SA context. His central claim is that it creates unrealistic expectations and promises “more than the experience can reasonably be expected to deliver”. It sets students up for that media definition of ‘globalisation’, leading them to expect a coherent singularity. He (2010:54) warns against “blithely claim[ing] to bestow the grace of global citizenship on our students.”

Thirdly Fairclough argues that

“[w]hen a particular social entity... is subject to globalization processes, we can expect change in its institutions and organizations, i.e. change in how they are networked together, change in orders of discourse, in discourses, in genres and styles.” (Fairclough 2006:33)

Following Fairclough, I argue that study abroad is a ‘particular social entity’ and that it is ‘subject to globalisation processes’. With Woolf I contend the discourses surrounding the relationship between SA and globalisation establish an incongruity between what study abroad practitioners intend to achieve and the outcomes those practitioners produce. Following Vande Berg, I acknowledge the need for intervention. These points can be

synthesised as follows. Globalisation has had a profound impact on the field of study abroad. Study abroad has absorbed a neo-liberal, economic rhetoric of globalisation, resulting in a mismatch between what ‘the field’ expects and what it is producing. This provokes a need to reconsider the way in which study abroad practitioners promote and ‘do’ study abroad. This reconsideration should take into account the motives of study abroad and plan to intervene in order to align goals and outcomes.

As part of the movement to a neo-liberal version of study abroad during globalisation, the field of education as a whole has taken up the notion of a ‘Knowledge Based Economy’. This has, in many cases, reduced education to the industrial production and consumption of knowledge (cf. Naidoo 2003). In this model, the student is the customer who pays to ‘consume’ knowledge. Those who work in education are under increasing pressure to ‘sell’ education. But as Fairclough (2006:21) reminds us, discourses (but not exclusively discourses) have real effects. The effects of the discourses I have outlined above are becoming increasingly apparent, but have not been dealt with satisfactorily. Naidoo, in an overview of the ‘repositioning of higher education as global commodity’, reports some preliminary findings;

“Such research reports that the consumer mentality in students has resulted in a loss of responsibility for their learning, an instrumental attitude to their work, an unwillingness to be judged and little tolerance for the expansion of study beyond the routine and the predictable.” (Naidoo 2003:253)

Naidoo’s work is a review of current sociology of education research concerning education as commodity. Less work has been conducted on how this manifests in international education.

2.3 Current work on Americans participating in Study Abroad

CIEE (2006:1), in a document entitled *Our view: A research agenda for study abroad*, acknowledge that “after 70 years of study abroad as we understand the term today, there are still a wide variety of things we’d like and need to know about student learning beyond

[America's] national borders." Six years have passed since this call for more research on SA and though the challenge has since been taken up, the desire for more and better research is always present.

It should be stressed that much of the research is in an exploratory stage. The field is still experimenting with various methodologies, theories, scales, and areas of investigation. Research in SA comes from fields as disparate as business, geography, sociology, psychology, linguistics, and international relations, to name but a few.

The last two decades have seen an explosion of research on SA. Most scholarly work on SA has concentrated on America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. De Wit (2007:255) states that, in the case of the *Journal of Studies in International Education*, "articles dealing with the Third World as a whole are only marginally present." This is congruent with the experience of the author.

A majority of the literature on American international students is directed at language acquisition (e.g. Archangeli 1999, Brecht and Robinson 1993, Davie 1996, Ginsberg 1992, Lafford 2006); orientations towards SA including; intentions, motivations, and expectations (e.g. Cantwell, Luca and Lee 2009, Goel, De Jong, and Schnusenber 2010, Martin, Bradford, and Rohrlich 1995, Mathews, Hameister, and Hosley 1998, Stroud 2010); cultural learning (cf. Abrams 1979, Beach 1995, Brubaker 2006, Carlson and Widaman 1988, Donahue 2009, Janes 2011, Talburt and Stewart 1999, Younes and Asay 2003) or general statistical information issued by SA interest groups such as NAFSA⁷, the IIE or the Forum on Education

⁷ NAFSA is an American member-based organisation of international educators. It has 10000 members and is the largest organisation of its kind. It publishes the *International Educator* magazine and various other international education materials.

Abroad⁸. A recent turn, however, is to research which deals with identity construction of international students (cf. Haugh 2008 and Koehne 2005, 2006).

The following section takes into account basic facts about American students abroad, the experiences of American international students in foreign contexts, and the prestige accorded American universities.

2.3.1 American study abroad: basic facts and intentions

American study abroad participation continues to grow, albeit quite slowly. The IIE (2011b:1) has reported that 270, 604 American students studied abroad in 09/10. This is only 1.4% of the total number of U.S. Higher Education students. 63.5% are female, 78.8% are white and 81.8% are undergraduates. The numbers of white students and female participants have seen a slight decrease over the last decade but are relatively stable majorities. This non-diverse representation is a central concern in the field.

Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, and Pascarella (2009:137) argue that “predisposition to study abroad reveals a complex interplay between socioeconomic status, social and cultural capital accumulated before college, and social and cultural capital gained during the freshman year. The combination of these factors influences a student’s intent to study abroad substantially...” While theirs was a study of intent to study abroad, and while it is recognised that intent does not necessarily lead to participation, it is not unreasonable to expect that these findings provide an indication towards the importance of socio-economic status in SA participation. Indeed it is almost folk-wisdom that socioeconomic status is one of the key barriers to participation in SA (e.g. NAFSA 2003:9).

Received wisdom offers that typical drivers of SA participation are; increased second language competency, gaining knowledge of other cultures and the opportunity to travel (e.g.

⁸ The Forum is a young but influential organisation with hundreds of American company, university and research group members. It has released, amongst other publications, a Codes of Ethics for Education Abroad and a Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad.

Talburt and Stewart 1999, NAFSA 2003). However, Stroud summarises the academic situation in the following way;

“unpublished doctoral dissertations comprise the majority of the research on the topic, the findings are not readily available to study abroad professionals nor to those who work with students at colleges and universities. In addition, the extant research consists almost entirely of single institution studies with small, convenience samples that may not accurately represent the target population, and some studies have employed questionable research methodologies.” (Stroud 2010:495)

More recent, broad, and technically sound research into study abroad motivations indicates that the picture is more complex. While the aforementioned reasons given for SA are the ‘stock answers’ or even the answers proponents of SA would like to hear, the reality may be very different. Cantwell, Luca and Lee (2008) reiterate the importance of context in postmodern research. They found that geographical regions of origin play an important role in intent to study abroad. They also suggest that the interaction (perceived or real) between the country of origin and the host country affected students’ perceptions of their SA experience. This will become an important point later in this thesis as the author shows how discourses of power and prestige play a part in the construction of international student identities.

Stroud’s research highlights the fact that increasingly, SA is seen as provoking

“... potential learning outcomes, such as development of intercultural communication and global understanding, [which] have become an economic commodity with high value in the global marketplace.” (Stroud 2010:504)

It is important to note that outcomes once stated to be goals within themselves, or at least ‘for peace’, have become reduced to economic commodities. Goel, De Jong, and Schnusenber (2010:260), in another recent study, would seem to concur with Stroud. They found that “behavioural beliefs are the primary drivers of study abroad participation.” These behavioural beliefs are defined as “[the] individual’s perception of the degree to which his/her behavior will influence a desired outcome” and include factors such as: “Promise of international

higher education experience”; “Perceived career value”; “Graduation dates, future job prospects”; and “[that it is a] transformative learning experience.” (2010:253) Once again, it follows that ideals such as mutual understanding or cultural knowledge are no longer of value in and of themselves, but because of the perceived value these skills bring.

It would appear that this is not only a perception by students but one with which business and employers concur. Trooboff, Vande Berg & Rayman (2007:29) have concluded that “it is clear that employers in general, and some classes of employers in particular, place significant value on studying abroad.” They go on to stress the point;

“studying abroad is not, in and of itself, a way to get a job... However, students who opt to study abroad are making a decision that can have a very positive impact on their employability. Employers clearly value many of the qualities, and especially the skills, that international educators associate with study abroad.” (2007:31)

It is worth reiterating that cultural understanding through SA has been commodified. Knowledge of other cultures and all the concomitant skills are no longer the goal; they have become a resource to use in the pursuit of a further goal. Agbaria (2009:67-68) argues that this “might jeopardize the social goal of educating citizens who can advocate the interests of public and global responsibility. What is at stake here is turning global citizen skills into merely skills needed for the workplace.”

In my view, the problem is not with business wanting students with the attributes outlined above, nor with students obtaining said attributes to ‘increase employability’. The problem arises when students study abroad but can’t or don’t want to obtain the skills they’re ostensibly learning. As has been shown above, just going abroad does not guarantee the change one expects to see. Hence the intervention into the learning process recommended by Vande Berg (2009). Franz (1998:68) proposes that the intervention should be about transforming “passive recipients into active educational partners”. Ways in which students

construct their identities through discourses, and indeed ways in which SA helps co-construct those identities, can help inform this intervention.

2.3.2 Americans abroad

Dolby (2008:61) has noted that one of the most common and important outcomes of the study abroad experience for American students is critical self-reflection. While this is one of the implied, general aims in the field of SA as a whole, Dolby's research indicates that this critical self-reflection is a more powerful experience for Australians. She contends that this is because;

“As individuals from a nation which is less central to global politics, they were not confronted on a daily basis with the need to think about who and what they are in the world. Despite this, they had more global awareness and political knowledge than the American students who participated in this study.” (Dolby 2008:62)

It is a common enough stereotype that Americans are “only interested in themselves”. Dolby has shown that this self-interest is incited or aggravated by locals because of American prominence on the world stage. However, Dolby has also been careful to point out that the situation that arises can lead to Americans having an overblown sense of American importance (2008:61). This heightened sense of ‘Americanness’ will be important during my analysis.

Research has shown that international students may form a minority group identity (Schmitt, Spears and Branscombe 2003). The students in Schmitt's et al. study found that identifying with a context relevant group category (i.e. “international students”), these students gained for themselves psychological protection. Although Schmitt et al. found that students who identified with their national group did “not suppress the costs of perceiving discrimination on self-esteem”, “essentially any self-aspect can provide the basis for a group identity *given the right context*” (emphasis in original. *Ibid.* 8). It must be noted here that participants in the study were “non-European and non-native English-speaking students” from 32 countries

(*Ibid.* 5-6). It seems no surprise to me that the students, being from disparate backgrounds, would not identify with their national identity. The study was also carried out at an American university.

Talburt and Stewart (1999:171) note in their study of American international students in Spain that “the flip side of this desire not to “stick out” was the emphasis a number of students placed on relationships with other Americans, in which they viewed their common outsider status as resulting in their close bonding.” (cf. also Twombly 1995) As the students in this study are overwhelmingly from America and because many activities are arranged that promote group bonding, similar findings are expected from the current research project.

While much research focuses on the effects of the study abroad experience on students, Schroeder, Wood, Galiardi and Koehn (2009:141) have noted that the impact of short-term study abroad programs on local communities has been “virtually ignored”. In an exploratory article, they note several ways in which SA may damage the local community and environment. Among these are factors like: unsustainable economic practices; the portrayal of values, customs and privilege that may sit uneasily with local custom or lead the local community to resent the students; and the exacerbation of the old stereotypes that Americans are more successful, attractive and able (2009:142-143). In short their project comprises; “[u]nderstanding and working to mitigate the negative impacts of study abroad on host communities...” (2009:147). They note that their research engenders more questions than it answers (*ibid.*). Several such questions arise in relation to the current research project; “In what way do American international students construct their identities in discourse?”, “Do they construct themselves as powerful economic actors and/or as superior in terms of Western notions of success, beauty, efficiency etcetera?” If recurrent discourses and identity constructions can be identified, one can proceed to find ways to “mitigate the negative impacts” as well as help students towards their goal of cultural understanding.

Literature that attempts to answer questions about American student identity construction is non-existent. However, research with tangential concerns, provides several avenues of investigation for this project. Mathers (2008:62) suggests that “understanding the tourist is as much about understanding where the traveller comes from as it is about their experiences away from home.” Though, as a study abroad practitioner, I would be one of the first to decry attempts to reduce SA to tourism, Mathers’ assertion stands true in a somewhat altered form; “understanding the study abroad participant is as much about understanding where the student comes from as it is about their experiences away from home.” Ironically, Mathers actually settles not on studying tourists but on students. She finds that “they were powerfully affected by the reverse gaze which positioned their relationship to their home in unfamiliar territory...” (2008:70) and that one participant, whom Mathers suggests to be representative of the experience in general, “learned what kind of American she was: she was not a marginal American, white and working class, but a full participant in the privileges of American citizenship.” (2008:71)

Two points are of particular interest here; firstly, that the students are powerfully affected by a reverse gaze that challenges them in their understanding of who and what they are is symptomatic of any intercultural experience. That, after all, is exactly what part of the project of international education is purportedly about. Secondly; Mathers’ participant constructed her identity abroad with recourse to ideas, practices and values embedded within an ‘American culture’. In fact, Mathers (2008:70) notes that “[her] encounter with a foreign place and new people resolved her relationships with her own home and beliefs rather than a greater understanding of South Africa.” Later in this research project, Mathers’ insights will be taken into account.

2.3.3 Foreign students at American institutions of higher education

While Americans studying abroad are the focus of this research, it is recognised that a study isolated from context is not able comprehensively to understand its subject matter. It is standard at most universities that there is one ‘international office’ dealing both with outgoing and incoming students. The field of international education is also not split into senders and receivers. Therefore it is suggested that better understanding the discourses and experiences of international students in the U.S. will contribute to a more rounded picture of the SA situation.

The number (and market share) of international students in the U.S. is staggering with 21% of all international students choosing to study in America in 2008/2009 (Lederman 2010); and a current total of 723,277 students in 2010/2011. (Open Doors 2011:1) It is generally thought that this is owed to the perception that American universities are better than any others. Indeed, it is a recurrent theme in the discourses of international students that American universities are, in fact, superior to those in their home countries.

For example Tubin and Lapidot (2008:209-210) found that “American scientific standards symbolized for the Israeli scholars not only American values, but rather global scientific values because of the central role played by US in the world...”. Hence American standards stem from American values and those standards and values are to be held up as ‘global scientific values’. The logic is that because America is so prominent and has undeniably achieved so much, its values and practices are the best and should be elevated to global standards.

Kim (2011a, 2011b) notes more explicitly that, in a study on Korean students pursuing degrees at American universities, the chief motivator for the students is the accumulation of global cultural capital. American universities are considered the best in the world, to such a degree that their control is termed “hegemonic” (cf. also Marginson 2008). Borrowed from

Gramsci, the notion of ‘hegemony’; “emphasises that dominant ideas are particularly powerful because they are the assumed, implicit aspects of a more explicit ideology” (Blackledge 2002:70). For the purposes of this research, the hegemony of American universities is seen as an assumed implication of the America’s cultural, military, and economic might as well as of America’s greater research output, facilities, and other indicators of ‘excellence’, as per the wildly popular university world rankings (e.g. the Times Higher Education World Rankings and the QS World University Rankings). It is both circuitous logic and ethnocentric thinking to assert that one’s own standards are the universal.

This manifests in common complaints from American international students that ‘things are done (or just plain *are*) better back home’ (cf. discussion of Carroll by Wilkinson 1998). Note once again that if one believes that all cultures have equally valid ways of being in the world, that they value different practices and standards, then one cannot believe a culture, or their ways, is universally worse. This ethnocentricity has already been highlighted as a central concern of the international education project.

2.4 Conclusion

Several important points made in the previous sections now need to be synthesised. In many ways the project of study abroad can be summarised by saying that it is concerned with preaching equality; all cultural systems have their own internal logic. Globalisation entails the increased movement (for some people/ideas/objects) around the world so that cultures come into contact. Study abroad is a key player in this process. However globalisation has taken on a neoliberal tinge with institutions of higher education forced to market and sell education to customers. In many ways, nations (represented by the universities and other educational interest groups) now have to promote themselves as service providers. America is in an hegemonic position in this regard, seen as the most prestigious country in which to study. These discourses shape the expectations of American international students. Because of the

relative importance of the U.S. on the world stage, the experience of American international students can be different from the experiences of other international students. U.S. students are forced to confront their own country's hegemony whilst abroad. In some cases they may affirm the view that they are from a 'better' country, in others they may come to a realisation that this is an ethnocentric perception of the world. If study abroad practitioners are to wish for the realisation of the latter option, they need to actively intervene in the cultural-learning process. However, SA as a whole has also taken up the neoliberal conception of the current global order. This author argues that if the field persists in the participation of this neoliberal global economy, they make it harder for themselves. As East notes

“[w]hile some students were adamant that education should not be just a commercial transaction, some noted that having paid money they should get what they wanted. The student who was the least satisfied was keen that students should have customer rights.” (East 2001:7)

If the student is treated as a customer, then the customer will demand their rights. If they demand ethnocentricity, then they will be unhappy unless it is provided. The challenge then is to find out how American students articulate their experience and to understand how that ties into the larger context of study abroad. Cantwell et al. have recently called for exactly this kind of research;

“...studies have highlighted the importance of examining international student experiences in the context of social, political and economic structures. Focusing on student experiences entirely from an individual psychosocial point of view obscures wider structural implications, thereby overburdening the student to adjust.” (Cantwell, Luca, and Lee 2009:341)

It has already been indicated that this author deems CDA the most effective way to include 'wider structural implications'. Also, following the discursive turn in the social sciences, the author believes narrative analysis, and in particular, positioning analysis, to be the best methodological tool for the job. First, however, we turn to identity and culture, and the way in

which they can be brought together to further understand the processes involved in the forthcoming analysis.

CHAPTER 3

A THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE (LINGUISTIC) CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

Globalisation is changing the world at a rapid rate. Though cultures, individuals, and beliefs have always moved within shared spaces and come into contact, the mobility of some people and values has accelerated these contacts. As the number of intercultural, inter-belief, inter-language, and inter-ethnic occurrences continues to rise during this time of increased connectivity, so does the acknowledgement of tensions between various groups. It has been shown that globalisation is not only a homogenising process, but a process which foregrounds issues of difference. Kim (2009:53) notes that these processes have “surfaced the notion of identity as a powerful way to differentiate, diverge, and even denigrate culturally and ethnically dissimilar others.” ‘Identity’ is seen as an increasingly important concept; however, the definition of the term is used differently throughout various academic traditions.

In this chapter, the notion of identity is discussed from an applied- and socio-linguistic perspective.

There is increasing interest by the academic community in the interaction of language and identity. Since the 1960s, scholars have started to acknowledge and investigate the connections between language, culture, social structures, and identity. As Hymes (1974:69) notes; “the term ‘sociolinguistics’, does pose the special question of the relation between linguistics and sociology.” From social categories such as ‘class’, and ‘gender’, it was only a short step to include questions of identity. This four-way, social-cultural-identity-language grouping has come to be the focus of a particular group of linguists, called socio-cultural linguists. Bucholtz and Hall (2010:18) are pithy in definition;

“By socio-cultural linguistics, we mean the broad interdisciplinary field concerned with the intersection of language, culture and society. This term encompasses the disciplinary subfields of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, socially oriented forms of discourse analysis (such as conversation analysis and critical discourse analysis) and linguistically oriented social psychology...”

This research is situated in the tradition of discourse analysis (and in particular, critical discourse analysis) and positioning analysis. Though positioning analysis stems from social psychology and not linguistics, its interdisciplinary nature has led it to be used extensively in a variety of academic disciplines. The general orientation of this work is in line with the tradition of socio-cultural linguistics as outlined above. Identity is approached from a discourse perspective, and with attention to socio-cultural concerns. Before these theoretical orientations are addressed, I will first consider the concept ‘identity’.

3.1 The identity debates

As befits the changing nature of life during a period of globalisation, identity has been discussed and argued over by many disciplines. Each discipline has its own approach and even within each discipline there are various arguments about identity. Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, and Liebhart (2009:10) name just some of the areas that have been or are concerned with identity; philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, and political theorists. Nor is debate about identity restricted to just academia, as identity can play a vital part in furthering the interests of nations, corporations, or even smaller social groupings, such as high school cliques. In contemporary South Africa, for example, arguments concerning a South African identity have been playing out across the nation’s media for some time now (e.g. Allison 2012, Fisher 2008, Gumede 2010, Sesanti 2011). Many tend to be sympathetic with the general view espoused in an article published in the *Mail & Guardian* (Krouse 2007). Ivor Chipkin, the social scientist and author of *Do South Africans Exist?*, is quoted by Krouse (2007) as saying “what I think is interesting... is this idea that identity is a project of the

self... it is not something given, it is not something imposed upon one.” If identity is a ‘project of the self’ and not ‘imposed’, then there is no ‘South African’ identity, rather a number of South African identities continually in the making.

With so much interest in identity one cannot expect to give a complete analysis of all the versions of identity. I will therefore limit myself to a broad overview of some of the major trends in identity theory before narrowing my conceptualisation to fit the current research, a study in the tradition of sociolinguistics. Both personal and social identity will be considered.

3.1.1 Personal identity

Wodak et al. (2009:11-14), following Ricouer, divide the term ‘identity’ into two sections: *idem* and *ipse* identity. *Idem* is Latin for ‘the same’ (cf. also Puttergill 2008:8). Traditionally what this has implied is that there is a unitary whole, an absolute essence, or an unchanging core to one’s identity. However, repeated similarity or sameness is not an effective marker amidst the chaos of a changing personhood. ‘*Idem* identity’, then, is better seen as a more general (perhaps *structural*) term speaking to the ‘uninterrupted continuities’ of any object. In this conceptualisation, minute changes that occur over time and transform an object do not destroy resemblance because there is a greater structure, a meta-container, of sorts, that ensures continuity. To summarise this argument one might see that a car, bought in 1986, with various parts replaced by 2012, remains the same car.

‘*Iipse* identity’ on the other hand, refers to a posited uniqueness. Wodak et.al (2009:13) suggest that ‘*ipse* identity’ can be provisionally seen as one’s subjectivity which one uses to assess and cohere one’s position and existence as is ascribed by others and internalised by the self. ‘*Iipse* identity’ is that subjectivity which allows human agency; that ability to direct oneself or act in the world.

The combined *idem* and *ipse* identity constitute what I refer to in this research as personal identity. Together they create a fluid and responsive notion of a person's existence, both a sense of continuity and structure in changing environments. These changing environments have their own part to play, though, as they constitute what is referred to as social identities. These social identities are the focus of the current research.

3.1.2 Social identities

Early work on identity in the field of sociology can be traced to Cooley and Mead, whose focus was on “the formation of the ‘me’” through interpersonal interactions (Cerulo 1997:385-386). However, research in the 1980s and 1990s, Cerulo (*ibid.*) argues, shifted to the concept of ‘collective identity’, with three particular collective identities having arisen as central in questions of the political. The three are: gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity, and class. A cursory look over much contemporary research will show that these concerns remain present today.

The individual, Cerulo (*ibid.*) argues, seeks “agency and self-direction”. By this she means that the individual identifies with a group or with several groups, constituting herself as a member of the aforementioned groups. Johnstone (2008:150-151) echoes this sentiment, noting these collective identities (Johnstone terms them categorisations) are an important part of the ordering of human existence.

Early linguistic work in this area has been attributed to Hymes who argued that linguistics was paying too much attention to language in the abstract and that anthropological studies were missing the importance of language. He proposed an ethnographic account of communication in which all factors relevant to the complete understanding of the communicative event would be considered. (Fasold 1990:39-40; Wardhaugh 2002:242-244) One of these factors was the norms of interaction within any given group. Hymes and Labov made use of the term ‘speech community’ which was defined as “a group of individuals who

share a common set of norms and rules regarding proper communicative practices.” (Ting-Toomey 1999:90) As Hymes (1964:3) saw it; “[f]acets of the cultural values and beliefs, social institutions and forms, roles and personalities, history and ecology of a community must be examined together in relation to communicative events and patterns as focus of study.” Hymes saw that in order to do this, linguistics needed to differentiate between a ‘language’ and a speech community. Hymes (1974:47) argued that the conflation of the two concepts had led to the concept of “speech community” being made redundant. Decoupling these notions would allow for the social group to be the starting point, from which “the entire organization of linguistic means within it” could be studied, rather than “start[ing] with some partial, named organization of linguistic means”. In reduced form, Hymes was arguing that linguistics heretofore had in some cases grouped people together under the concept of “shared language” even though that language could be spread over several heterogenous groups (cf. the differences between American, British, and South African Englishes and how difficult it would be to try and bound them as a single community). Starting with ‘language’ served to limit the possibilities of analysis. Starting with ‘speech community’, on the other hand, allowed for new analytical possibilities such as the investigation of identity and language.

Labov was another pioneer in the study of speech communities. He is well-known for his work on variant Englishes in New York (e.g: 1964, 1966). However, his seminal study (originally 1963 but reprinted in 1972) is of a sound change (centralization) in the diphthongs /ay/ and /aw/ on Martha’s Vineyard island. Labov (1972:3) argued that “social pressures are continually operating upon language, not from some remote point in the past, but as an immanent social force acting in the living present.” In a sample of 69 local islanders (i.e. permanent residents, not migratory visitors), Labov found that the local articulation of the two diphthongs had actually changed contra the general movement in articulation for the preceding two centuries. He also found that there were no non-social explanations that would be able to demonstrate the linguistic change. The answer he found was rooted in social

patterns, in particular, that to use the centralized diphthongs was to signal ‘that he is one of the natives to whom the island really belongs.’ (Labov 1972:36) This sense of unity arises from a threat to the locals’ livelihoods and happiness on the island. Thus, in Labov’s view, language came to *reflect* an identity (native, islander).

Gumperz (1964:137) was another early sociolinguist interested in speech communities which he defined as “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction over a significant span of time and set off from other such aggregates by differences in the frequency of interaction”. By this, Gumperz means that a speech community is any group of people who interact with each other for a ‘significant period of time’. Gumperz meant to differentiate between group A and group B by the regularity of interactions. Hence group A, a group of friends, members of whom regularly come together, is differentiated from another group of friends, group B, members of whom also regularly come together, by the fact that members of group A come together less often with members of group B than with members of their own group, A.

While these early theorists are rightfully praised for their work in reconnecting the linguistic and the social, emergent in this line of thinking are critical questions concerning the modernist assumption *par excellence*; essentialism. Gumperz (1971:91) provides an excellent example of this way of thinking; “[linguistic features] are signals by which natives judge and receive advance information about the nature of a communication situation. Their social function is in every sense equivalent to the sociologist’s ‘symbols of social status.’” For Gumperz, linguistic features reflect (are symbolic of) a reality (a discrete and immutable social group) that exists, independent of the features themselves. However, scholars have come to realise that the group itself is not an absolute, unchanging monolith. A new group can be created, it can be maintained, or it can be disputed and dismantled. These groupings, or collectives, are recently reconceptualised as fluid and changing, not a completed piece of

work but a site of ongoing change. It is in the interactions of people who may lay claim to a particular collective identity (or attributes thereof) that the identity is renegotiated. In this way, linguistic features are no longer seen as reflective of a social group or identity, but rather as constitutive of them.

Although identity comes to be understood as fluid, “people do orient to the ways they categorize themselves and are categorized by others...” (Johnstone 2008:150) It is not a constant, a thing that is, but rather a process in which an individual participates, constructing his/her identity through identification, claiming, contestation, rejection and or agreement with categories of self-definition (cf. Cameron 2001, Cerulo 1997, Johnstone 2008, Puttergill and Leilde 2006, Wodak et al. 2009, etc.). Identities may or may not be fragmented and (perhaps) multiple but, as Lemke (2008:19) notes; “[identities] are at least multi-faceted if not in fact plural”.

3.2 Poststructural linguistic theories

As has been pointed out in the introduction, one of the primary ways both identities and groups are constructed, is through discourse. As Cerulo (1997:387) points out, this is called social constructionism. Constructionism holds that social objects in general, and identities in particular, are “continually renegotiated via linguistic exchange and social performance” (Cerulo *ibid*).

3.2.1 Performativity

The notion of performance is important here and is worth expanding upon. Current notions of performativity owe many debts to various scholars, but in its current configuration, it owes more than most to the work of Butler. Predominantly interested in gender theory, Butler argues that identities are not innate, but rather products of a system in which power is

unevenly distributed. One is coerced to play by the rules and this ‘performance according to the rules’ reinforces and naturalises the identity;

“Hence, as a strategy of survival, gender is a performance with clearly punitive consequences. Discrete genders are part of what 'humanizes' individuals within contemporary culture; indeed, those who fail to do their gender right are regularly punished. Because there is neither an 'essence' that gender expresses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires; because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender creates the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all. Gender is, thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis. The tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of its own production.” (Butler 1988:522)

One is not a female but one performs expected, approved, and regulated gender acts that (re)produce femaleness.

Pennycook takes up this line of thought in his work on the reformulation of the concept ‘language’. Pennycook (2004:2) wants to transcend the “notions of organic unity, traditional continuity, and the enduring grounds of culture and locale” which are rooted in essentialist and colonial notions of fixity and absolutes. He suggests that the notion of ‘performativity’

“provides a way of thinking about relationships between language and identity that emphasize the productive force of language in constituting identity rather than identity being a pregiven construct that is reflected in language use.” (2004:13)

If identity is constructed through iteration, this metaphor allows Pennycook (2004:14) to assert that “language itself [can] be seen as a product of performative acts”. Further, it can be argued that if language doesn’t exist independently, but is rather performed, then language is continually in the remaking and noticeable similarity (‘systematicity’ in Pennycook’s terms) is an illusion created by the sedimentation.

‘Performativity’ also highlights the fact that identity can be subconsciously enacted (as in to perform a task) or consciously deployed (as in to give a rendition, to perform a part). For example, a man (called X) can perform ‘being a man’ on a daily basis without giving the ‘doing’ any thought at all provided, of course, that he is present in a speech community, a group, that agrees on the conventions of ‘being a man’. He would certainly mark his speech with words, phrases, silences, styles, etc., that constituted him as being a man, but he needn’t do it on purpose; some things just become habit. However, when faced with a different situation, X may want specifically to perform another identity. In the locker room after a gym session he may want to perform (or automatically slip into the role of) the ‘macho, weightlifting man’ or at cocktails with a new girlfriend, the ‘sauve gentleman’. As X moves from group to group, and in and through multiple situations, so does another of his facets become apparent. Though both Butler and Pennycook are quick to deny the view that conscious deployment is easy, Pennycook (2004:16) notes that conscious deployment has been shown in response to repression or as a means of refashioning the self. This ironic ‘play’ in identities has yet to be explored fully.

In the examples above, X reaffirms the construction of predefined, yet fluid groups. Yet he could also have challenged or subverted said group. For arguments sake, let’s say an unspoken rule for the group identified as ‘macho, weightlifting men’ is that anything deemed feminine may not be talked about in the locker room. Let’s also say that talking about flowers is deemed feminine. If X were to suddenly talk about the flower arranging classes he’s taking or the beautiful bunch of roses he’s bought his mother, *he would be contesting the construction of the group identity*. Of course one can never predict whether such locker speak would catch on, but it is entirely possible that regularly talking about flowers (and perhaps even learning flower arranging) could become a part of the ‘macho, weightlifting men’ group identity.

The reasons that X may have for any of his activities above are complex and multiple. Fairclough (1985:747 as quoted in Wodak 1995) argues that “in human matters, interconnections and chains of cause-and-effect may be distorted out of vision.” Many factors may arise to restrict or allow one to perform an identity in a particular context. Amongst these are power, fear, and desire, which will be discussed in a later section.

CDA attempts to account for these distortions (also that which is hidden and denied), restrictions and allowances and understand some of those factors whilst not losing either the complexity or multiplicity of the situation.

3.2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA is perhaps better described as a loose collection of approaches, rather than a coherent theory. Although many of CDA’s roots are in linguistics, it would be untrue to say that CDA ‘belongs’ to the field of linguistics (Critical Theory⁹ for example has also contributed to CDA). Because interest in power and oppression is not restricted to linguists only, and because of the loose nature of CDA, critical discourse analyses are performed across academic disciplines and conducted in an interdisciplinary way. Many scholars couple CDA with other approaches. This, Weiss and Wodak (2003:18) have shown, is typical of interdisciplinary research which “ideally integrates [different] theoretical approaches and thereby creates new holistic approaches...” Fairclough (2006:29) provides a recent example in which he “contributes to cultural political economy by developing a version of CDA which strikes [him] as particularly fruitful for it, and applying it analytically.”

As a linguistic tool, it arises from various interests including socio-cultural linguistics, applied linguistics, and pragmatics. Weiss and Wodak (2003:12) argue that, in these sub-fields, “the notions of ideology, power, hierarchy, gender and sociological variables were all seen as

⁹ Critical theory aims to disrupt scientific orthodoxies that replicate hegemonic orthodoxies inherent in intellectual thought. Critical Theory is thus concerned with ideology and, by extension, language use. Major theorists in the tradition of critical theory include Adorno, Habermas, and Foucault.

relevant for an interpretation or explanation of text.” What unifies these disparate approaches is a concern with the relationship between language and power. As Wodak (1995:204) declares, CDA is “fundamentally interested in analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language.” Language is a tool used in the construction of knowledges and relationships and is thus subject to the whim of those who would be in control. Language is a way of enacting the social, of performing roles in a society. At the same time, though, language use is also affected by the social. This dialectical relationship has been summarised by Weiss and Wodak (2003:22); “[o]n the one hand, the situational, institutional and social settings shape and affect discourses, and, on the other, discourses influence discursive as well as non-discursive social and political processes and actions.” Thus, issues of identity are foregrounded. If CDA is to analyse relationships uneven in terms of power, then CDA must necessarily be interested in what identities people *do* and *may* form. Bucholtz and Hall (2010:27) put it more eloquently when they posit that “identity is emergent in discourse and does not precede it” and locate identity “as an intersubjectively achieved social and cultural phenomenon.”

3.2.2.1 Indexicality

Understanding the link between identities and language has been the goal of sociolinguistics for some time now. This, indeed, was the one of the primary outcomes of Labov’s research on Martha’s Vineyard as described earlier in this chapter. However, Johnstone (2010:30) has pointed out that thinking about *how* linguistic forms acquire social meanings (i.e. social and individual identities) is a fairly recent phenomenon. Understanding this process is integral to understanding why CDA is a valid tool to investigate identities.

Johnstone’s (2010:31-35) answer to how the process occurs is simple but powerful. A particular linguistic form is used by a speaker in a specific context. The linguistic form recurs in the same context either implicitly or explicitly. One form of implicit recursion occurs

continually by the fact that language is reflexive. Because language in use must necessarily be about language, the use of a particular linguistic form strengthens the link between form and context. Explicit recursion can happen when speakers (or writers) frame speech metapragmatically. For example, saying “You can tell an English guy is from KwaZulu Natal if he says ‘*skraal*’ when he means ‘hungry’”, links ‘English guy [who] is from KwaZulu Natal’ and the linguistic form ‘*skraal*’. Johnston (2010:32-33) provides examples of other ways of explicitly and implicitly connecting social identity with linguistic form. This connection can also be termed indexicality.

It is important for individuals to participate in various groups at moments that suit the individual. In order for them to participate in a different group they “need ways to show which set of social alignments is relevant at the moment, and they need ways to create new sets of alignments” (Johnstone 2008:133). These ‘indexicals’ point to (or helps create) information outside of the denotation of a particular word; this information is social meaning. In the example given above, the use of the word *skraal* indexes the identity ‘English guy from KwaZulu Natal’. Indexicals like these can become more permanent (and widespread) through a process of enregisterment. Johnstone (2010:35) argues that when an indexical form becomes enregistered, it is

“linked with styles of speech associated with identities, and they could be used to create contexts for those styles. For example, a person could make use of a feature correlated with being working class in order to create rapport with a working-class speaker or annoy an English teacher.”

It is easy to see how, by using different indexicals, a speaker may lay claim to different rights, or power, and hence, identities.

3.2.2.2 Power and identity construction

Recent research has focussed on how people contest or reaffirm ascribed or selected group identities. However, it has been noted that several factors may limit how one constructs one’s

identity. If language use is seen as a function of everyday use by several participants, one cannot avoid the reality that the ability to use language is unevenly spread. As Johnstone argues;

...not all members of human social groups play the same roles. Social groups are often divided into subgroups (such as “social classes,” “castes,” or “cliques”) with different status and differing access to economic, cultural, or political power. (Johnstone 2008:130)

Johnstone’s sentiments here recall the work done by Bourdieu (e.g. 1997) on cultural and social capital. Bourdieu, better than other theorists working with the same concepts, delineated what these forms of capital were (cf. Portes 1998:3). To Bourdieu, cultural capital existed in embodied, objectified, and institutionalized forms. ‘Embodied cultural capital’ refers to skills acquired by an individual (e.g. accountancy). ‘Objectified cultural capital’ refers cultural goods that require embodied capital to access their value (e.g. accounting software that needs accounting ability to give it worth). ‘Institutionalized cultural capital’ refers to a way of systematizing cultural capital so that it is guaranteed and measurable (e.g. a Bachelor of Accounting degree). Bourdieu made it clear that acquisition of cultural capital was not a fair endeavour;

“It can immediately be seen that the link between economic and cultural capital is established through the mediation of time needed for acquisition. Differences in the cultural capital possessed by the family imply differences first in the age at which the work of transmission begins...” (Bourdieu 1997:49)

And,

“Furthermore and in correlation with this, the length of time for which a given individual can prolong his acquisition process depends on the length of time for which his family can provide him with the free time, i.e., time free from economic necessity, which is the precondition for the initial accumulation (time which can be evaluated as a handicap to be made up).” (Bourdieu 1997:49-50)

‘Social capital’ in Bourdieu’s (1997:51) writing, is the “aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.” These networks include families, tribes, clans, secret groups like the Freemasons, etc. Some networks, naturally, are bigger and more powerful than others, thus giving the agent more power in interactions with others.

Thus one’s ability to accumulate cultural and social capital is not just dependant on innate, natural abilities, but rather on a complex set of factors including what nation you are born into, what class, race, and gender you are, and how much social capital your family has obtained hereto.

Power then, can in many senses can be seen as a resource that a person, or a group, has (no) access to. In this way, power can be used to enforce a status quo, and, linguistically, to claim rights or assign responsibilities. Bourdieu (1997:53) makes this point when he argues that “the members of the group must regulate the conditions of access to the right to declare oneself a member of the group...”. A lecturer (with embodied cultural capital *and* social capital) in front of a class (who are striving to gain the very cultural and, in some cases social, capital the lecturer can provide) has the power to assign the responsibility of silence and attention to her students and the power to claim the speaking rights. Power may or may not be transferrable from one situation to the next. For example the same lecturer should not expect the same power to dictate conversation were she to run into the students in a restaurant (though the students may cede power to her). She should also not expect the same kind of power were she to sit in on a departmental meeting where she may be a junior lecturer, assigned less power in relation to senior professors. As one may take up different identities in different situations, one may gain or lose power.

Power is also not to be seen as an enduring property of social interaction as it too can be contested. Many a senior lecturer may rue ‘the old days’ when students only talked when

asked a question, while others may welcome the greater participation and discussion. Solidarity is an important counterpart to power (Johnstone 2008:129) and is present in all social interactions. Solidarity is that which allows investment in a group in the first place; it is the recognition of similar interests and needs which bind group members together.

3.2.2.3 Fear and desire

These similar interests and needs of individuals leads Lemke (2008:26) to declare that “the maintenance and development of identity is always also a material process...”. By this he means that our identities are linked to our very existence as physical bodies. As we are driven by various bodily needs, fears and desires, so our identity construction is necessarily based on these too. Fear of pain (both physical and psychological), Lemke (2008:27) suggests, leads us to ascribe roles and duties to ourselves and each other. If we are to avoid pain, then we must construct our identities in such away so as to reduce the chances that we will encounter it. Our social actions are enveloped in a need for protection, access to resources, and human companionship. Therefore, desire also drives conformity. To use the earlier example of the lecturer and students, the student could in theory quite violently oppose the power imbalance in the classroom. However, the student may need a degree to get the job he wants (to pay for the things he desires or needs), he may need to study so as to placate anxious parents on whom, after all, he is still financially dependant. Fear and desire are therefore very pertinent when analysing power distribution, and, by implication, the construction of identities.

3.2.2.4 Resistance

The fact that there are various social groups to which one belongs means that there are various social identities, each with its own sets of rules, rights, and obligations, to cycle through. There are multiple institutions and groups that vie for our attention and obedience. Lemke (2008:31-32) identifies governments, families, corporations, and schools as some examples of these. Lemke (2008:33) notes that sometimes these various groupings’ interests are not

mutually incompatible and may, in the end, be subservient to greater, “dominant interests”. Though Lemke makes note of these greater, “dominant interests” (and here he refers to consumer capitalism and its concomitant massification), he notes that hybridity can allow for greater freedom and choice in the construction of one’s identity. However, he argues that it is only in making full use of globalisation’s provision of difference, that we can live freely. The underlying argument is that exposure to more institutions, interests, and existences highlights contradictions and incongruities in hegemonic systems; understanding that different options exist, allows one to make use of those other options to resist ascribed identities that one does not wish to carry. While this may be true, I have argued earlier in this thesis that access to these differences varies across the world because of access to resources (economic, social, and cultural). Therefore Lemke’s argument is in itself to be understood for what it is; an expression of Western, middle-class subversion. Once again, what is possible for some, is not possible for all.

3.3 Criticism of CDA

There is some criticism of CDA. Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000:455) have narrowed the most common issues to those of interpretation and context. The problem of interpretation is where CDA practitioners are accused of fuzziness of boundaries and concepts, a legacy of the interdisciplinary nature of CDA. In addition, some have questioned whether analysts who work in the CDA tradition can also force interpretations (their own viewpoints) onto the data. Korobov writes;

“SCHEGLOFF argues that the analyst must show that the observation being advanced and the analytic line being taken is resonant with the actual orientations of the people who matter most – the ones who actually perform the social practices of which we speak.” (2001:4)

What this actually means is that CDA needs to be aware of its own orientation towards the text. An analyst should be careful not to impose a theme from the outside. That is, an analyst

should not beg the ideological question and arrive at conclusions based on prior convictions. Korobov (2001:7) argues that to overcome this problem, a tool of analysis needs to be able to investigate “the fine-mechanics of how participants are actually – linguistically and sequentially (and not simply ideologically) – drawing up subject positions or indexing (from the ground up) patterns of lived ideology.” Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000:460) state that in order to overcome the problem of context, closer attention should be paid to “concrete instances of talk or concrete instances of text...” Korobov (2001) finds the answer in positioning theory¹⁰.

3.4 Positioning theory

Positioning theory (PT) draws on many of CDA’s insights but is developed alongside, rather than from within, CDA. PT emerges from the realm of social psychology and in particular, a social psychology of selfhood (Davies and Harre 1990, Tirado and Galvez 2007). From the outset PT declared an interest in language and identity.

Davies and Harre (1990) were the first to develop the fundamental concepts of the theory, although the initial thrust of ‘positioning’ had been proposed by other authors including Hollway (in Bamberg 2004:335) who suggested that discourses enable certain positions and allow them to be taken up. Davies and Harre’s work is based in an immanentist view of language; viz. a language is not to be found in an independently existing realm as proposed by structuralist linguistics, but rather a language can only exist in everyday use. Language is an agglomeration of the actual points of use by its speakers. As Davies and Harre (1990:2) themselves put it; “According to the immanentist point of view there are only actual conversations, past and present.”

¹⁰ Other alternatives have also been proposed to overcome the shortcomings of CDA. Corpus linguistics have been employed to provide far more empirical data (e.g. Baker, Gabrielatos, KhosraviNik, Krzyzanowski, McEney, and Wodak 2008) and Wodak (2007) has also suggested pragmatics as a useful antidote.

In accordance with speech act theory, language, in Davies and Harre's conception, is used by speakers to achieve goals or ends. This use of language (illocutionary force) is tied to the idea of the subjective position for if one wants to achieve a certain goal, (s)he has a range of language strategies to fit the actual conversation in action. Choosing a particular strategy means producing oneself in discourse in a particular way. A person's identity is therefore inextricable from the discursive practices in which they participate. Davies and Harre's argument for an identity-in-the-(re)making is summed up in the following way;

“An individual emerges through the processes of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through various discursive practices in which they participate.” (1990:5)

So an individual isn't a single essentialised subject, but has a fluid identity which can act and react according to new options introduced in the discursive moment¹¹. This action or reaction is what Davies and Harre describe as taking a position, or, as they would say “positioning... is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines.” (1990:7) As these positions arise from joint construction, it is important to understand that there may be a number of tensions in the adoption of positions. Davies and Harre list five dimensions to take into account: Firstly, a speaker's words “inevitably contain images and metaphors which both assume and invoke the ways of being that the participants take themselves to be involved in.” (1990:8) Secondly, these assumptions and invocations may remain hidden to the speakers and they may argue that their way of reacting to a particular situation is a matter of brute fact (that's just the way it's done). Thirdly, a situation-in-discourse may be understood differently by the participants according to various individual and social beliefs and attitudes. Fourthly, positions are not linear representations of an essentialised self but rather, “the cumulative

¹¹ This assertion doesn't deny that there are other ways to construct identity, but rather focuses on one option by which to do so.

fragments of a lived autobiography” (1990:9). Fifthly, the positions can be seen in terms of expected roles by the participants. They may see themselves as conforming to a societal role when they adopt a position, or may be angered at a perceived positioning by their interlocutor as ‘more successful’, to provide just two examples.

As Davies and Harre initial work is rooted in conversation (i.e. between two or more people), questions of power, normativity, and resistance are foregrounded. This is a line of thinking later researchers would follow enthusiastically. First, however, Tan and Moghaddam (1995) extended the concept from the interpersonal to the intrapersonal, where a person positions themselves. They called this ‘reflexive positioning’. Reflexive positioning can appear in journals, diaries and autobiographies but also in day to day small moments of personal reflection. Their other contribution was to highlight the fact that “a satisfying discussion of positioning on any level absolutely requires the inclusion of cultural considerations.” (1995:393) As culture influences everything one does, including how one may speak, can speak, or wants to speak, it plays a fundamental role in positioning. This recognition brings context far closer to the fore in discussion of identity constructions.

Another contribution appears in Bamberg (1997). Bamberg (1997:336) argues that by applying positioning to narrative analysis, one brings together “how people attend to one another in interactional settings” and “what the language [in a narrative] is referentially “about”.” (cf. Barkhuizen 2009:284) Bamberg saw his approach as operating at three different levels each of which he approached through three questions: “How are the characters positioned in relation to one another in the reported events?”; “How does the speaker position him- or herself to the audience?”; and “How do narrators position themselves to themselves?” The first question addresses the issues of what exactly is going on at a textual level between the characters within the story. The second is concerned with the text-receiver relationship. The third question is concerned with the speaker’s sense of self. This three-level mode of

enquiry has been taken up and advanced by a few other scholars (e.g. Barkhuizen 2009, Korobov 2001, Korobov and Bamberg 2004).

Korobov (2001) has shown how positioning in general, and Bamberg's model in particular, is a fruitful way to mediate between the perceived limitations of CDA and Conversation Analysis. In his view, Bamberg's model 'connects' CDA and CA, correcting CDA's propensity to over-rely on top down analytical approaches, and CA's tendency to not pay as much attention to context as CDA proponents argue they should do (2001:10). (cf. Bamberg 2004:335-336)

3.4.1 Positioning studies: a brief literature review

Although some working with positioning theory differ from the methodology outlined above, all adhere to the basic concepts and formulations already laid down. The literature on positioning is small but has grown during the past decade with contributions coming from various fields. Appropriately, most positioning analyses do not slot into discrete categories for meta-analysis. Some general trends running through the literature, however, can be identified.

Pavlenko (2001) has shown how versatile a form of analysis positioning can be. In a study of 28 authors autobiographies or autobiographical essays, she analysed ways these bilingual, cross-cultural American writers negotiated various aspects of their identities. She highlighted several identity themes that emerged through her analysis; linguistic, racial and ethnic, cultural, gender, and social identities. She showed and examined ways by which the writers navigated these various identities in autobiographic writings by taking positions that explicitly or implicitly claim those identities. Amongst Pavlenko's (2001:339) findings, she asserted that "for the authors in the corpus all five aspects of identity [as listed above] are intrinsically linked to language through links made available by the dominant ideologies of language and identity." One particularly fruitful area of analysis has been gender positioning.

3.4.1.1 Positioning analysis and gender

Bamberg (2004), using a three-step analysis, has shown how 15 year olds construct their identities as a part of a group. At the first level, he analysed how the speakers constructed the characters and placed them into relationships with one another in the story line linguistically. At a second level he analysed how and why the speakers interactively tell the story. At the third level, Bamberg (2004:336) analyses the ways in which the speakers lay claim to positions with regards to “cultural discourses and normative (social) positions.” In summary, Bamberg finds that they take positions of ‘male’ and ‘adolescent’ and participate in ‘slut-bashing’ as linguistic resources that allow them “to claim a mature and adult-like position” (2004:350). These positions, Bamberg finds, are not natural or absolute categories, but serve to enforce a ‘naturalization’ of a particular version of maleness.

Bamberg and Korobov (Korobov and Bamberg 2004), in further work on other data arising out of the same fieldwork, have further shown how adolescent males position themselves as “mature and heterosexual” (2004:486) in group discussions; in doing this, the males resort to a normative heterosexual position via linguistic means. However, as the hetero-normative position has both positive and negative aspects, the males are required to navigate these aspects discursively out of fear of rebuke. Therefore, their identities as mature heterosexual males are in negotiation, constantly being constructed in the moment. This has proved insightful for their work in the field of psychology in which they aim to recontextualise aspects of masculinity and development.

Vitanova (2004) has also analysed gender and positioning. She coupled positioning theory with concepts from the work of Bakhtin in order to investigate the experience of four Eastern European couples’ gendered perspectives of second language use in America. In the four couples from the study, Vitanova found that the women positioned themselves/were positioned as the linguistic authority in the relationship, yet it was the women who expressed

shame at perceived poor L2 usage. Vitanova further shows how gender emerges as a social category in the discourses of the individuals in the study and argues for more research into this phenomenon.

3.4.1.2 Positioning analysis and education

Second language education, as well as education in general, has been a major object of enquiry for those using positioning as an organising concept for discourse and narrative analyses. Baynham's (2011) article investigated the role of narratives in interviews of teachers of English to speakers of other languages. Though the role of narratives was not a primary concern in the original interviews, it nevertheless became evident to Baynham that narratives similar to those 'small story narratives' described by Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (e.g. Bamberg and Georgakopoulou 2008) emerged repeatedly. Importantly, Baynham's interviewees were or had been in the same industry as the interviewees, leading to "a high degree of congruency [in the interviews] with interesting discursive effects. Baynham noted that the interviews were co-constructed by the interviewer and interviewee, and showed interesting forms of pragmatic repair work, face saving techniques, and stance taking. This research corroborates the idea that interviews can be mined as sites of narrative performance.

Barkhuizen (2009) has also employed Bamberg's and Georgakopoulou's 'small story' method, as well as Bamberg's three-level analysis, in investigating how a Tongan woman positions herself to the ideological discourses of second language teaching. Though she is not yet a teacher, she positions herself as such in order to gain the right to tackle educational issues that she feels are important to her. She also positions herself as an authority on these educational issues by self-identifying with Tongan learners of English as a second language. Barkhuizen (2009:295) expanded on previous positioning analyses by "extending the range of data for analysis, if available" in order to introduce macro-level contexts to provide a fuller analysis.

Menard-Warwick (2007) provides a positioning analysis that intersects various issues of gender, language socialisation, and second language learning amongst Latina women in California. She, like the others interested in positioning in educational contexts, has argued that teachers' assumptions, which influence the way they position their learners, may lead to tensions in the classroom. More specifically, teachers who assume they are 'empowering' immigrants may in fact be limiting the learners' options. She draws the conclusion that teachers of English as a second language need to offer a safe space for learners to self-position so as to avoid the imposition of normative ideologies. Importantly for this research, Menard-Warwick shows how the normative ideologies of a field (and therefore practitioners within it) can end up limiting students unintentionally.

Anderson (2009) has similarly noted that learning can be impeded by processes and structures wherein discrete, immutable categories are used to position learners. She studied an American fifth grade class over a period of fourteen weeks and reported on one of the groups, into which the class had been subdivided. One student was positioned by the teacher as a 'kind' (similar to a stereotype) of student. Even when gave evidence to the contrary, it was largely ignored as he had been essentialised. Anderson (2009: 308) argues that

“[a]nalyzing positioning as mediated (i.e., a confluence of multiple forms of mediation) acknowledges how interactions and social actors construct meanings of practices both in reference to the interactions themselves (traditional focus of positioning theory) and in terms of how these interactions relate intertextually and intercontextually to relevant texts, events, practices, and ideologies.”

Thus Anderson also includes intertexts and intercontexts to expand the possibilities of positioning analysis.

Søreide (2006) shows how large a variety of subjects positions can be taken up in the classroom. In her study of Norwegian teachers, she identified over 30 subject positions and 4

identity constructions pertinent to the teachers' positionings. She shows how moving between identities (i.e. taking up various positions) is an important part in the construction of teacher identity. She argues that the study of the effect of normative discourses on the positions-as-resource should be put on the agenda. The study is somewhat limited by not more systematically enquiring after how larger, national discourses of the Norwegian system interact with individual teacher's identity constructions. However, Søreide (2006:528) has indicated that her work feeds off a larger study that "aims to describe how discourses within the Norwegian elementary school system produce and prevent certain constructions of teacher identity."

3.4.1.3 Positioning analysis and conflict

The acknowledgement of inherent tension when people position themselves and others and are positioned, has also caught the attention of some scholars who highlight it specifically. Bartlett (2006) used a positioning analysis to illustrate how tensions within a given system may show points of commonality that can be used for collaboration and conflict resolution. He studied a region of Guyana and investigated the discourses between the locals, the government, and developmental groups. While Bartlett (2006:128-129) acknowledges that "narrative strategies are strategic rather than permanent", he argues that one can still "reveal ideological tendencies within the sense-making narratives of individuals as a function of their experience and internalisation of situated local practice."

Tirado and Galvez (2007) have also considered how conflict and negotiation arises when asserted and imposed positions are contested in a study of a virtual space. They investigated conflict that arose on a distance university's forum, what is termed a "virtual campus" (2007:9). The three forum members position and reposition themselves and each other in posts on the forum in order to claim and distribute rights and responsibilities. This notion of 'rights and responsibilities' will be important in my analysis.

Tirado and Galvez are not alone as Sarmiento and Shumar (2010) have also considered the dynamics of positioning in a virtual space amongst members of an online maths community. In another angle, Jones (2006) has done an interesting positioning analysis which considers how older people contest their being positioned as 'old'. While these analyses are interesting on their own terms, they do not provide much new material for the purpose of this thesis. They are mentioned just to show the broad array of interests of those who use positioning analysis as a tool.

3.4.1.4 Positioning analysis and international students

The most pertinent (to this research) positioning analysis is one performed by Crawshaw, Callen and Tusting (2001). They use positioning to analyse one student diary during the time he is studying abroad in Spain and France. This student creates for himself a position that mediates between his perceived 'home identity' and the alien socio-cultural environments in which he finds himself. This newly created position is a hybrid or liminal space; a space where being external to the bounds of a system, forces recognition of one's own boundaries. This, although Crawshaw *et. al.* do not acknowledge it explicitly, is much in line with the notion of 'mindfulness', a common organising principle in the field of intercultural communication and study abroad. Mindfulness, according to Ting-Toomey (1999:46) "means the readiness to shift one's frame of reference, the motivation to use new categories to understand cultural or ethnic differences, and the preparedness to experiment with creative avenues of decision making and problem solving." It is through mindfulness (i.e. a new position) that students are expected to learn more about themselves and the culture in which they are living. Crawshaw et al. (2001:112) assert that "by the end, Will [the student] has constructed himself as an occupant of an indeterminate intercultural space which he describes through difference and uniquely 'enhabits'. While there is much of interest in this study, it is felt that the authors, by concentrating too closely on the 'intercultural space' as position, have

missed a vital opportunity to investigate other aspects of identity construction such as those which this study has proposed. Though Crawshaw's team have shown that Will (the author of the student diary) constructs for himself a different position to aid his learning, they do not show what parts of other identities he rejects or accepts in the construction of this meta-identity. Additionally, this study uses a definition of 'positioning' that seems not to follow the work done by some of the early positioning theorists mentioned above.

Despite a slow start following the initial proposal that positioning could yield insights into various fields and situations, positioning analysis has recently been taken up as a popular tool for analysis. It has covered various topics, provoking questions about the nature of power, difference, and resistance and the role these play in the performative construction of identities.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study argues that discourse is one of the primary ways by which individuals construct their identity. In order to investigate identities constructed through discourse, examples of discourse in action are needed.

It was decided early in this research that already existing data would be preferable to solicited data for several reasons. Firstly; a researcher cannot remove his own convictions from the data gathering process if he is to solicit responses directly. Though there are ways to mitigate potential bias (cf. Saville-Troike 2003:100), the use of existing data fruitfully removes the locus of potential bias from solicitation to interpretation. The bias in interpretation will be discussed later in this chapter. Secondly; the ‘observer’s paradox’ is the realisation that a researcher’s presence may affect the ways in which respondents talk about themselves (Saville-Troike 2003:92). Thirdly; by using existing data, this study could be extended to cover a period of four years whereas the researcher would, if he were to gather it directly, be confined to just a single year’s worth of data. Fourthly; I had direct access to extant data that has not been used in scientific research yet. This increases both the ease with which this research could be conducted as well as the time which could be spent on other aspects of the research.

For these reasons I decided to use students’ responses to a survey issued by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) to all participating students at the end of their semester abroad. This is standard practice for CIEE around the world.

4.1 Surveys as methodological tools

Surveys used in social science research vary widely. Surveys, in general, allow for standardized data collection and, if they are self-administered, remove interviewer bias

(Glastonbury and MacKean 1991:228). Glastonbury and MacKean (*ibid.*) have noted some dangers in using surveys including respondent literacy and control over whether respondents fill the questionnaire in themselves, without outside help. As all CIEE students are studying for a bachelor's degree, literacy is guaranteed. There is, unfortunately, no guarantee that the student respondents fill their surveys out individually, but the personal nature of many responses would seem to indicate that many do, in fact, invest in this form of feedback and respond individually. An additional problem has been noted during the course of this research; namely, some students do not expand on assertions, or deal with complex questions in the level of detail that may be expected. As Glastonbury and Mackean (1991:228) note, "[t]he value of greater standardization is less bias, but it is harder to cover complex material in this way". Though these shortcomings are recognised, it is felt that this does not detract from the usefulness of the surveys.

Representative sampling can be a difficult issue in social science research. However, as the survey has gone out to all CIEE students who have studied at Stellenbosch over a four year period, this data is representative at least of the local context on which this study focuses. It is noted, however, that there are other non-CIEE American students studying at Stellenbosch University and that they may have different experiences to the respondents in this research.

The design of a survey and the questions therein can cause methodological problems but, as this survey is pre-constructed, this is not a concern here.

4.2 The CIEE Survey

The online survey is a tool used by CIEE since Spring 2003 (January-June). All students who study at a CIEE study centre around the world are asked to complete the evaluation. Some of the results are summarised and are made public via the organisation's website.

As already mentioned, the survey is issued within the final weeks that the students are in Stellenbosch. While time given for completion of the survey is, in theory, limited, in practice the link to the survey can be kept open for weeks to give enough time for students to respond. The invite (and subsequent reminders) is issued via email containing a set of instructions and a link to the CIEE website on which the survey is hosted. The purpose of the survey is somewhat akin to customer feedback. The CIEE Head Advisor introduced the surveys to the students of fall 2010 and fall 2011 respectively;

“The link to our program evaluation is now live. Please take a few minutes to provide us with your (anonymous) feedback. This link doesn’t stay open forever, so please complete the survey as soon as possible. Your input is important to us!” (Personal communication 2010)

“It’s that time of the semester when you get the opportunity to provide CIEE feedback on your experience here in Stellenbosch. PLEASE take a few minutes of your time this week to complete the following survey. Your responses are confidential and form the basis of making future improvements to our program. Your feedback is very important!” (Personal communication 2011)

While the survey is both anonymous and optional, the students are encouraged very strongly and several reminders may be sent to pressure the students into completion. The extract below is an example of an email sent to one student who had failed to respond after several opportunities;

“I hope this finds you well and enjoying life back in the States. I’m writing today with a quick and URGENT request that you please complete our on-line program evaluation. Although your responses are confidential, I’m told from our IT folks that you haven’t yet completed the survey. Can I please ask that you do so? Your feedback is important, and we’d like to have 100% response rate.” (CIEE Head Advisor, Personal communication 2011)

Note that each student’s feedback is considered important to make the program better – fairly typical wording in terms of evaluations in general. Readers may note, however, that the

survey positions the student as a consumer and, given the tension between consumerism and education outlined in Chapter 2, wonder why this survey is being used at all. While it is acknowledged that the nature of the survey can influence the nature of the students' responses, there are still two important reasons for using this survey. Firstly, no questionnaire this researcher could ever have devised would have been entirely free of his convictions and no essay responses solicited from students about their time in Stellenbosch would have been untouched by the knowledge that it was going to be used for research. This survey, having been established by forces outside of the researcher's control, allows for a measure of detachment. It also offers the opportunity to investigate issues of identity with minimal explicit mention of those issues. Only the last question of the survey invokes identity categories explicitly.

More importantly, this survey is an example of the types of discourses which this author has argued shapes the field of SA. It is an artefact arising from the field under investigation and is indicative of the way in which, as the author argued in chapter 2, the field has been overtaken by neoliberal discourses. It therefore provides an opportunity to look at the nexus between an 'official' discourse, as issued by a preeminent SA provider, and the student's identity as an international student.

4.2.1 The Questions

The master survey comprises thirty-six questions, of which thirty were included for the Stellenbosch version by CIEE's head office in Portland, Maine. When a question is omitted by the head office, a blank yet numbered question appears on the survey. This explains any discrepancy in numbering. Of those remaining thirty questions, fifteen others have been omitted for the purposes of this research. Fourteen of the fifteen are questions of degree, e.g. "The program information I received from CIEE before my departure was useful." where the student may respond "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Neither Agree nor Disagree", "Disagree",

or “Strongly Disagree”. These have been removed from consideration for two reasons. Firstly they are not discursive textual features, and secondly, because the responses to these questions are aggregated into a pie chart, the researcher has no way to match these ratings with each numbered participant. The fifteenth question left out concerned program staff members. CIEE has requested that this question be omitted for legal and ethical reasons.

Fifteen questions therefore remain to be used for this study. Some sample questions include; “Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.”, “What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?”, and “Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?”

All questions allowed for as short or as long of a response as the student wished. Each student could, if they wished, also refuse to answer a specific question. In answering these questions, students in advertently position themselves in ways that construct their identity.

For a sample survey and a separate list of the fifteen questions used in this research, please see *Addendum A*.

4.3 The Participants

As has been noted a number of times, all responses to this survey are anonymous. There is no way to know what race, gender, nationality, or any other identity marker each respondent would agree with, unless they state it explicitly within the answers to the survey. That’s being said, however, using additional data¹² on the groups in question, one can still get a general sense of the numbers involved and compare that to American study abroad statistics. There were 46 respondents out of a possible 51 (90%). 75% (38 people) of possible respondents are female which is over 10% higher than the American national sending average of 63.5%. 76%

¹² This additional data comes from the CIEE and Stellenbosch University application forms that the students are required to fill out for the program.

(39 people) of possible survey respondents self-identify with the racial/ethnic categories of Caucasian or white. The national average is a remarkably close 78.8%. Seven left the racial/ethnic identity section incomplete, two students identified as Hispanic, and one identified with African American, Multiracial, and Asian, each. 96% (49 people) are US citizens, with one Mexican and one Englishman rounding out the numbers. One white, female student stayed for a second semester. She was invited to complete two surveys but as one of the surveys to which she was invited did not have a 100% response rate, the researcher cannot know whether she responded twice. The sample represents 29 colleges and universities in the United States of America. All the students were, at the time of responding, undergraduates pursuing a bachelors degree.

4.4 Data Analysis

Arguing for the discursive constructions of identities behoves me to use an appropriate tool for analysis (cf. Korobov 2001). I begin by using theme analysis as an initial step in the analytical procedure. Thereafter I use critical discourse analysis, and more particularly, positioning theory. There are slight variations to the uses of positioning theory and this author uses an amalgamation between two popular approaches proposed, respectively, by Pavlenko (2001, 2007) and Bamberg (1997). From the former, I have adopted the idea of first coding the data according to position-themes arising in the discourse of the narrative fragments. Themes which appear on multiple occasions will be considered non-idiosyncratic and therefore as possibly fecund areas of investigation. From the latter, I use two ideas: firstly, the thematically coded data is analysed in three steps. Secondly, and related to the first idea, I pay fine attention to ‘small stories’ as they arise. These ‘small stories’ provide data generally overlooked in narrative analysis.

4.4.1 Theme analysis

Simply put, “[t]hematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behavior.” (Aronson 1994:1) The first step is that patterns that arise regularly in the text are taken as important themes. Next one checks the text to identify all of the data that relates to these themes. These themes can themselves be organised into sub-themes according to other patterns that arise in the texts. Finally, Aronson (1994:3) argues that one must “build a valid argument for choosing the themes” by interweaving the academic literature with the developing story. It is, however, important to recognise that a researcher cannot *uncover* themes but must rather induce them as part of a co-construction with the respondents (cf. Kelly 1999:323).

4.4.2 Positioning analysis

At Bamberg’s (cf. also Barkhuizen 2009, Korobov 2001) suggestion, the data aligned with each theme will then be analysed according to how the respondents position themselves at three levels. Firstly, the author will consider in what ways the respondents talk about themselves and others within the narrative content. Secondly, the author will consider ways in which the respondents interact with the perceived audience. Thirdly, the author will discuss the broader question of how the respondents wish to be seen at a meta-level.

Throughout, I pay attention to ‘small stories’ items which may have in the past been overlooked as ‘useless’ or ‘about nothing’. These are moments in the narrative that may seem unimportant or uninteresting but which, on closer inspection, provide interesting additions to the data.

Finally, in order to pay attention to the call for questioning the normative (or hegemonic) discourses as outlined at the end of the previous chapter, I bring together the above analyses

to show how study abroad has affected numerous students through a set of normative discourses.

4.5 Themes and aims of the research

The coding of data according to themes will allow me to investigate the first three hypotheses as laid out in the opening chapter: Firstly, that the majority of students will draw on discourses of identity to articulate their experience in South Africa; secondly, that a variety of subjective identity positions will emerge from the analysis; thirdly, that the local context will greatly impact the subjective identity positions the students choose to adopt.

The three-level analysis as well as the use of ‘small stories’ will enable me to produce a closer reading of these identity positions. This closer reading will allow for the highlighting of identity constructions built on commonalities between various responses. It is at this stage that the author will consider the hegemonic discourses apparent in the field of SA as discussed in chapter 2, arguing that SA impacts the ways students choose to position themselves as asserted in the author’s fourth hypothesis.

4.6 Limitations

As has been discussed in chapter 3, positioning theory has been used in an attempt to address some of the shortcomings of CDA and Conversation Analysis. While a rigorous academic analysis will navigate these shortcomings, it is acknowledged that two interrelated problems may occur.

Firstly: I have worked in the field professionally for three years now. I bring with me a set of assumptions about how the field of SA works, and how study abroad students ‘are’. To combat this, the data will be coded entirely by ‘themes as they arise in the text’. Though I may be predisposed to seeing certain themes and missing others, with discipline and careful consideration, I hope to produce a faithful rendering of the data according to the suggestions

in the literature as outlined above. The coding of the data is also to be understood as a continual process so as to prevent top-down categories from being impressed upon the text.

Secondly: any analysis has the possibility to become overly concerned with either the micro level of data, or the macro level of ideological analysis. Bamberg's three-level analysis is strictly used to enforce a clear balance between the two possibilities.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS: DECONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING IDENTITY THROUGH SMALL STORIES

This chapter discusses a set of experiences by American students at Stellenbosch University for a semester of study abroad. Several recurrent themes are exhibited through the initial theme analysis. These common themes are the primary focus areas though some mention will be made of individual experiences.

This analysis will begin by dissecting three surveys which have been identified as particularly representative of the preliminary findings, according to the three-level analysis recommended by Bamberg. From these analyses, a series of themes will be induced which will be used as the basis for further discussion on a theme-by-theme and position-by-position basis.

Level one of the positioning analysis is an investigation into who the characters in the story are, and what the story is about. Level two concerns how “content and structure of the talk are actually interactive effects” (Korobov 2001:11) leading to the speaker being positioned by, and positioning herself towards, an audience. Level three concerns the construction of a master narrative of the self, as the respondent answers the question “who am I?”.

5.1 An analysis of Lauren’s survey.

“Please don’t just dismiss my experience, I know I’m extreme but these words have been thought about time and time again” Lauren, Spring 2011

5.1.1 Positioning Analysis Level 1

One of the reasons I begin with Lauren¹³'s story is because it is, in her own words, *extreme*. The literature (e.g. Urban & Orbe 2007) shows that the period of Study Abroad (SA) can be an incredible stressful time in the student's life. It is a time of great learning and one in which the realities of another culture are encountered. Lauren's survey highlights these facets of the experience superbly. In being so extreme, she has highlighted the majority of themes that recur across the data. Her survey also contains the longest responses and generates much data for this study.

Despite her assertion that she is being extreme, Lauren positions herself as someone "choosing [her] words wisely", as "more than an outsider looking in", and as "someone with a well-rounded view...". She has clearly thought about this a lot and, wants to give her opinion.

Lauren's survey starts off quietly. Considering how much she has to say about her time in Stellenbosch later in the survey, it is odd that she only responds to the second question¹⁴, and then it is a simple evaluation of her orientation experience. It is in responding to the prompt in Q12; *Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions*, that she starts to open up. The narrative here consists of Lauren describing her housing, a residence called Carpathia¹⁵, in detail. No mention is made of the activities and excursions that appear in the prompt.

She is the main character in her own story as is evidenced by the 19 first person singular pronouns, 7 first person plural pronouns, and 6 possessive pronouns she uses during just this

¹³ All names, including those of residences are pseudonyms chosen randomly from a list of actors and actresses. In addition, the titles of various staff members have been changed, as well as the title of an academic module taken by some students.

¹⁴ A comprehensive list of the questions can be found in the appendix.

¹⁵ CIEE Stellenbosch students are offered the choice of two residences (names changed). Carpathia is a predominantly South African residence, with no more than 20 out of 500 students being international. Lusitania is a predominantly international student residence. Other international students at the University of Stellenbosch may stay privately (in flats or student houses) or in Lusitania or Titanic (apartment style residences). Few other international students ever stay in Carpathia.

response. Lauren's heavy self-reference is something of a theme throughout her whole survey. Though this would be expected given that the survey as a whole is set up to ask respondents various questions about their experience, Lauren's self-reference is far more prominent than in most other student responses. The first half is reproduced here to give the reader an idea¹⁶;

"I would have appreciated more information on the resident hall I chose to live in before making my decision to live there. I did not feel I was given enough information about the different options in order to make a well-informed choice. Carpathia was a huge disappointment, and if I was aware of things such as limited dining hours, blatant racism towards international students by students in leadership positions (hakkas), lack of communal microwaves, poor laundry facilities, and mandatory meetings; I would have chosen differently and that choice would have enhanced my experience instead of taken away from it. I paid way too much money to have an unsafe living environment throughout my entire stay in South Africa. The final straw for me was when we had to move out for our semester break, we should have known about the fact that this COULD happen; though it had not in the past."

Lauren uses this small story (the story of her time in Carpathia) to "create (and perpetuate) a sense of [who she is]" (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008). Her suggestions for improvements take the form of a series of positionings in which she is a misled or, under-informed and unhappy customer. She "paid way too much money to have an unsafe living environment throughout [her] entire stay in South Africa" and would have "appreciated more information". Choice is one of the hallmarks of the consumer economy in which we live. Indeed, Lauren acknowledges that there was choice available, but feels as though she couldn't make an informed choice. She explicitly mentions she would have chosen differently and believes that that "choice would have enhanced" her experience.

The other major position Lauren assumes in this first response is only alluded to in the first section, but is developed more rigorously in the second;

¹⁶ Please see appendix for full survey

“In the states, none of this would be acceptable, and though it was a difference environment I still expect integrity in the process of placing me in a housing assignment. How can CIEE trust that we as international students will be taken care of properly and treated respectfully when these are the things I had to deal with, along with my fellow international students?”¹⁷

She goes on to highlight “racism towards international students”, thereby positioning herself as a member of a larger and predefined group. She continues this positioning, as well as re-invoking the idea of choice, in mentioning that “we had to move out for our semester break, we should have known about the fact that this COULD happen...”. This group position becomes explicit in the second half of her response when she asserts that “In the states, none of this would be acceptable” and when she asks “how can CIEE trust that we as international students will be taken care of properly and treated respectfully when these are the things I had to deal with, along with my fellow international students¹⁸?” Here we see the emergence of a ‘victimised identity’. As Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008:3) point out, the asides and ‘small stories’ used by the speaker “feeds into a sense of self – in the form of a continuous process within which this sense comes to existence (*emerges*).”

Here Lauren explicitly introduces the organisation who is responsible, CIEE. They are mentioned twice and positioned as providers who “should protect” and who should be doing more than “making money off of us”. Evidently, in Lauren’s eyes, they have failed miserably. They are even positioned against alleged “other international groups” who Lauren thinks have not used “Carpathia for a reason”.

¹⁷ The full responses can be found in the appendix.

¹⁸ Student references to “international students” can be very confusing. At an institutional level, “international students” refers to all non-South African students at the university. This includes a large number of students from other African countries. Sometimes the use of “international students” by students responding to this survey could be inclusive, but much of the time it is exclusive and limited to either other Americans or Americans and Europeans. The ostensible reason that they are excluded is that most students from other African countries are here to study for a full degree whereas the Europeans and Americans are here for a short stay only. This divide is instituted through splitting the group during orientation.

Opposed to CIEE the organisation, Lauren mentions CIEE staff members in a more favourable light. Burt, the Head Advisor, is “brilliant at making [her] think outside of [her] own experiences”. He is positioned as a mentor and leader who “others are willing to listen to and follow”, as “the shining star” and the “best, hands down”. Both Burt and John (the Secondary Advisor) are mentioned as highlights of the program, and positioned as providers of support whom Lauren “always knew... were there for anything I need and [who] always had an answer”.

Other characters appear quite prominently in the introductory paragraph, the “hakkas” (HK¹⁹). They are said to be racist towards international students, “aggressive and unwelcoming” and one in particular (the HK charged with caring for the international students in Carpathia) was “no help whatsoever, she never followed through with her promises...”.

Another subject position Lauren takes are as a worker who had a “job”. This job is, in fact, a Community Engagement Module (CEM) offered by the University of Stellenbosch. In it students, as part of their learning, are placed with teachers in a local school and tasked with preparing lesson plans for their classes. Clark, the coordinator of this course, is introduced by Lauren as being “wise and intelligent”. However, Lauren states that Clark kept comparing Lauren’s CEM group to those that had come before. Lauren says that this “made the environment uneasy” as she “felt like there was always an undertone of ‘give us money.’”. Clark made her “feel like time wasn’t good enough, and that [she] had to give [her] things to the children or buy the school something in order to “leave a legacy” or be remembered.” Clark also failed her when he “just kept telling [her] about historical perspectives” when she brought up her concerns about the corporal punishment she had witnessed at the school. Here she positions herself as the just crusader, standing up for others’ rights.

¹⁹ House Committee members are students elected to lead the residence.

“But how is change made? Is it made by people dismissing the wrong that they see? Making excuses for injustices so they feel better about themselves? No, it's someone standing up for that injustice, that wrong-doing. I stood up, in a submissive way, and my concerns were met with excuses.”

Clark, in opposition, is positioned here as dismissive, as making excuses, and as someone who won't stand up for injustices. This extreme, dual, archetypal characterisation as both 'wise and intelligent' and selfish (or impotent) is especially interesting as Clark is not the only character in Lauren's narrative to be positioned at polar opposites.

The last major character is, broadly, 'a South African'. In Lauren's vocabulary she mentions “domestic students” whom she couldn't get to know and who “either hated [her] because of [her] sexually and nationality or loved [her].” Stellenbosch, in a convoluted synecdoche is not “ready for America”. People in Stellenbosch “treat each other as less than human beings”. South Africans “[she] experienced were disgustingly racist towards each other”, many were “awful to Americans”, “ignorant”, and close-minded. Even when ostensibly speaking positively about South Africans, Lauren condescends by saying that she knows better than South Africans do; “[m]ost people think South Africa will never change, but I believe it is full of good people who just don't know that they can change the world around them.”. This dualistic representation speaks to the difficulty Lauren may be having in trying to characterise identities that are fluid, complex, and contradictory.

For much of Lauren's survey, she has stated that she is extremely unhappy owing to various occurrences and people she has encountered. Apart from those things already mentioned she has also “experienced severe sexism”. However, at several points in the responses, Lauren positions herself as someone who has learnt a lot. As just a few examples, she has: “come to understand other points of view”; had her mind opened “beyond restrictions”; she was helped to “understand South Africa”; and “Through and through [she] learned a lot”.

Some other characters appear briefly, including “life long friends [she] made within the CIEE group”, “learners and host teacher” that she “adored”, and “professors [who] weren’t challenging [her] or putting an actual effort into teaching [her] the course material.” These will be discussed in relation to other in-depth appraisals in a later section.

In summation: Lauren has positioned herself as several things; an American, an international student, a paying but misled customer, as having a job, as a woman, as in the minority, and as someone who learned. She mentions several characters in her survey: Clark, who is wise and intelligent, but does not try and stand up for the oppressed, CIEE as an organisation that is not doing their job and just trying to take her money, other international students, domestic students and HK members, local CIEE staff, etc. In doing this she has encapsulated her entire experience in response to a survey. Her response to the implied audience of this survey is the object of my next assessment.

5.1.2 Positioning Analysis Level 2

According to Korobov (2001:11), Level 2 analysis concerns “[h]ow the speaker both is positioned by and positions him/herself to the actual or imagined audience.” This is also an important interactional step which allows the speaker to construct themselves with and against other characters in the narrative (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008:8). The actual audience is CIEE as an organisation, as has been made clear in chapter 4. Not only is the survey issued by a CIEE staff member, the survey is administered through the organisation’s website, the survey has the logo emblazoned on it, and very many of the questions mention CIEE explicitly. For example Q8: ‘What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?’.

The survey (and hence CIEE) positions the student as a customer. Question 6 reads “Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told but were not? Please comment.” The question acknowledges that CIEE is

providing a service and requests the student to provide feedback. Other questions ask for suggestions, strengths and weaknesses, opinions on quality, highlights, etc. Lauren acknowledges this positioning by explicitly stating that she has paid money to be on the program. She even asks, as though speaking directly to a CIEE staff member, how CIEE can “trust that we as international students will be taken care of...”. In addition, Lauren uses the passive modal “should” three times to indicate that CIEE has an obligation towards her;

“CIEE should protect their students from having a hostile living environment, we should not be placed with domestic students if we aren't welcome there. It should be about the student safety instead of making money off of us.”

The last of the three is the strongest as it demands a re-orientation from “making money” to “student safety”. As was mentioned in the level 1 analysis, being a customer entails having choices, a fact not lost on Lauren. Her repeated assertions that CIEE did not do their job (i.e. by not correctly informing her about her choices, keep her safe) also strengthens her acceptance of the position of customer.

As a customer who paid money and who therefore has the right to comment, Lauren makes full use of her position. She lists services, or things she wasn't aware of; “limited dining hours”, “lack of communal microwaves”, “poor laundry facilities”, and “mandatory meetings”. The former three are things Lauren expected, the latter one she did not. “The final straw”, in Lauren's own words, “was when [the international students] had to move out for [their] semester break...”. In the build-up, Lauren had been using the first person singular, at the climax of her argument, she switches to the plural, and shortly thereafter, introduces the term “international student”, positioning herself as such. She also claims that she is speaking on behalf of all the international students by referencing things that she, “along with her fellow international students” had to endure. It seems expected that by representing a larger interest group, her argument will be more forceful.

Chapter two of this thesis highlighted a tension between learning and consumerism. This tension is evident in the positioning strategy of the survey. Questions 6, 8, and 12²⁰ are questions that implicitly position the student as a customer. Questions 15, 16, 17, and 18, in contrast, blurs the distinction by asking for a consumer response to a learning experience. Lauren responds to the prompt “If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.” by accepting the positioning of herself as a student who was encouraged, “he made me want to understand”, and aided, “he helped me re-frame many situations”, by Burt, the instructor (and head advisor). However, in response to question 16 “If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.”, she shows what kind of learner she is. She accepts the position “foreign student” and repeats it explicitly in a common variant “international”. She states that the courses weren’t great *because* she was international, suggesting that there are different standards for local and international students.

Though time is taken at the beginning of each semester to explain that there are differences in perceptions of what constitutes quality in the American and South African contexts, and though she claims to have learnt how to re-frame cultural differences, when it comes to what she expects as a foreigner/international student, she is adamant about receiving an education that matches her expectations. This viewpoint is apparent again in the section (already discussed) in which Lauren displays trouble understanding cultural differences with regards to corporal punishment at her CEM module. Though Lauren accepts that she is a student, and therefore accepts she is here to learn, she qualifies this position by claiming her customer position in another small story;

²⁰ Refer to the appendix for the text of the questions.

“CEM students should be informed about the disciplinary methods used at [the primary school]. I was not aware that I would be witnessing corporal punishment, it was hard for me to deal with and when I brought it to Clark, he just kept telling me about historical perspectives.”

CEM students (who are all foreign), “should be informed”, and she “was not aware”. Lauren has mentioned numerous times how she’s opened up to, and learnt to understand, South Africa, but does not validate that claim here. Rather she goes on to negate the fact that she has anything to learn here at all. By saying “Clark just kept telling her” she is denying his position as teacher. She implies that he dismisses the wrong he sees and “makes excuses”. Lauren feels that his way is wrong and that hers is correct. She asserts that change is made by “someone standing up for that injustice”, and that she “stood up”. She ends by asking how “the learning service project can be successful if [people] can’t hold each other accountable?” It is clear that Lauren’s concern has to do with different values. Instead of accepting that she can learn from others, she feels offended and uses her position as a customer to assert her own values on the performances of others.

5.1.3 Positioning Analysis Level 3

Once again, following Korobov’s (2001:11) advice, level 3 positioning concerns “[how] the narrators position themselves in answering the specific and general question of “who am I?” and “how do I want to be understood?”

At the level 2 analysis, I noted that Lauren apportions blame to various characters in her series of small stories: CIEE, for misinforming her and not treating her as she wishes to be treated; domestic students, for being racist and not welcoming; HK members for not helping her, being aggressive, and being racist; Clark for not standing up for ‘justice’; the people of South Africa and/or Stellenbosch for being sexist, racist, ignorant, and a generally odious nation/community.

Lauren positions herself strongly as a couple of things throughout her survey: she is an American; she is an international student; she is someone who has learnt a lot whilst being challenged; someone who stands up for what is ‘right’; and someone who, though a victim of the situation, has “survived”.

The only other characters positioned favourably are Burt (who is American, and works for an American organisation) and John (who is a South African, but who has worked for and with Americans for some time). Burt is in particular spoken of as brilliant, patient, a shining star, a highlight, and the best. He is her leader and guide. They have helped her survive.

Lauren partially acknowledges that cultures are fluid and complex, but constantly claims the position of someone who is wise and who has obtained the answers. She denies that she has anything else to learn and that which remains is, to her, simply wrong. In the field of intercultural communication, Lauren can be said to have an ethnocentric perspective. Ethnocentrism is widely acknowledged as the biggest barrier to intercultural learning. Ting-Toomey (1999:157) provides a simple and useful definition; “[e]thnocentrism means that we hold views and standards that are “own group/centric” and make judgements about other groups based on our own group’s values and beliefs.” Lauren displays a consumer-ethnocentrism. If a consumer can choose what they want, and their choice is based on ethnocentrism, then the consumer is choosing what they want. To flesh this out a little more clearly, I would like to offer the following:

Lauren clearly takes pride in being an American and compares America to South Africa. The US is a positive entity for her, it is just, per brute fact, correct. As she makes explicit; “In the states, none of this would be acceptable”, and “Stellenbosch isn’t ready for America”. An American organisation (CIEE) positions her as a consumer, an identity that she is willing to co-construct and perpetuate. The positions of consumer and American are conflated mid-way through the first paragraph when the list of customer complaints is suddenly juxtaposed with

“in the states, none of this would be acceptable...” She is an American, and it is as an American that she lays claim to the position of consumer. As a consumer, she claims the right to get what she wants. When her position as consumer was challenged during her period abroad, she experienced anger and disappointment and doles out blame. The objects of her blame are mostly South Africans (but also CIEE as an organisation and only two South Africans (Burt and John) are spared the full weight of her anger. In contrast an American is held up as one of the most redemptive qualities (besides her having learned) in an otherwise disastrous sojourn. Throughout this analysis, I have shown how Lauren uses small stories to construct her identity - a sense of sameness that she holds as ‘who she *is*’. Lauren positions herself as someone who has tried her hardest and learnt about South Africa. However, South Africa is not America and America (and American values and ways of living) is what she wants. This is contra findings by Dolby (2008) and Mathers (2008) that a common outcome of study abroad for Americans is critical self-reflection. While Lauren definitely is self-reflective, especially concerning her American identity, the reflection is not of a critical nature, serving always to confirm a hegemonic American identity positively, rather than question her construction of that facet of her identity.

Next the author turns to an analysis of a far more positive experience, from the same group, which helps strengthen the themes and positions, but also provides an alternative perspective on the matter.

5.2. An analysis of Denzel’s Survey

“I certainly believe that I was able to gain the maximum benefit from my study abroad experience... South Africa certainly surpassed my expectations with things it has to offer.”

Denzel, Spring 2011

5.2.1 Positioning Level 1

In stark contrast to Lauren's negative verdict of South Africa, Denzel's opinion is entirely positive. Denzel also emphasises choice and information in positioning himself in his first response; "[m]y top two choices were Cape Town and Stellenbosch and I chose Stellenbosch..." and "CIEE was extremely helpful with information...". He goes on to mention housing options (a "plethora" of choice), "a lot of freedom" in course selection, and reasons for his having chosen Stellenbosch. He positions himself as a rational agent having made good decisions on good advice for the duration of his stay. He is the stereotypical 'happy customer', stating that he "cannot think of any suggestions for improvement", the "housing services were superb", that he "wouldn't change a thing", and believes he was "able to gain the maximum benefit from [his] study abroad experience".

Denzel also positions himself as someone who has learnt a lot. He was given the chance to have "an open mind to be creative and take advantage of all that [was] offered here." He was (positively) challenged and stimulated and learnt "a vast amount in the short time".

Denzel uniformly positions all other characters in his story positively. The resident staff was "extremely helpful and answered all of [the CIEE students'] questions" during orientation. They are positioned as helpful, competent guides no fewer than six times in fifteen responses. CIEE, as an organisation, is also mentioned thrice more as enhancing his experience, being very informative when he had to choose which program he would attend, and as being "one of the smartest decisions [a "mate" and he] made".

South Africans feature strongly in Denzel's survey too. He came because he wanted to (and did) live with South Africans (in fact he mentions this positively several times), found that "everyone is friendly", loved the course he took with "nationals", and found that "South Africans are quite friendly". In fact, he goes on to say, someone he "did not know at all except for the fact that [they] lived in the same res", gave him a lift.

He also positively mentions a “buddy”, a professor (claimed to be one of the best he’d ever had) “mates”, a “counselor”, and the kids he volunteered (“play”ed) with.

5.2.2. Positioning Level 2

Denzel is almost uniformly pleased with his stay in South Africa, the only exception is when he saw “a glimpse of tensions between race” occasionally. His very first sentence is in response to question 6 and reads “I feel that Stellenbosch should be hyped up more than it really is.” He thus offers that not only does the program meet expectations, but it is even better than expected and therefore deserves more exposure. He lists a number of ways in which he was completely satisfied. When he is asked for strengths and weaknesses, suggestions for improvement, and opinion of quality, he rates them all highly and never offers ways to better the program. He explicitly claims that CIEE and the program are some of his best decisions.

It is noted that most things Denzel lists are facets of his experience of the country, activities and people. There is a conspicuous lack of references to having learnt anything, except when explicitly asked in the survey. He does once mention classes unprovoked, but then it is only to say that his classes allowed him to visit the local township and “partake in some service opportunities”.

This absence of the notion of ‘learning’ in the text is most obvious when he responds to the prompt “Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester”. He mentions that it was “an extremely rewarding experience” and a highlight, but does not at all mention that he learnt from it. It seems that Denzel’s position as a student is less important than his position as a consumer of ‘an experience’ in his survey.

This survey positions Denzel as a CIEE customer, and Denzel is only too happy to take up the position as a satisfied customer giving positive feedback.

5.2.3 Positioning Level 3

Denzel positions himself as a customer-student; he values freedom and choice, particularly the freedom to shape his experience abroad as he wishes it to be. In response to the prompt “please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa”, he writes;

“I choose CIEE because I wanted to live with South Africans. I also wanted to live in the winelands and I heard the rugby at Stellenbosch was top tier. I had the opportunity to play here which is also a factor I weighed in choosing. I also heard that the gym was unbelievable so with all of these plus the fact that it was a short drive from Cape Town made me choose Stellenbosch. There was also the fact that my counselor spoke highly of Burt and my buddy visited Stellenbosch and loved it. I also liked the idea of a college town.”

He gives a series of reasons (mostly around services and activities) for having chosen Stellenbosch as a destination. Throughout the survey, he retroactively affirms each of his reasons as good choices. Indeed, being in the winelands was a highlight for him, as were his rugby matches, and his evaluation of both Burt and John. All of the characters he constructs in his small stories were positive examples for him. All of his expectations were met and, according to him, “surpassed”.

Denzel shows that he is someone who knows what he wants and appreciates being helped to get it. CIEE, the imagined audience, receives all the praise for things having run smoothly. Like a customer, he had options, weighed the pros and cons, and settled on a product he thought he would like. When it was even better than he expected, he couldn't have been happier. This correlation between positive violation of expectations and positive evaluation finds support in the work of Martin, Bradford, and Rohrlich (1995). The authors looked very broadly at the study abroad experience, including data on housing, climate, coursework, friendships, etc. Their results show that, for the student participants in their study, when the

students' experience of the aforementioned facets of their time abroad was more positive than they had expected it to be (prior to the trip), they tended to evaluate the experience more highly.

However, sitting between the polar opposites of Lauren and Denzel's experiences, is a slightly more balanced view. It is to a third analysis of one of these views to which we now turn. The following student was not in the same cohort as Lauren and Denzel, but nevertheless her survey resonated with many of the same themes.

5.3 An analysis of Marilyn's Survey

"Truthfully, I'm more than satisfied. I was burnt out after a semester working two jobs and taking a staggering course load. But being here gave me a new perspective and I feel as if I learned quite a bit about South African society in its current transitional stage." Marilyn, Spring 2009

5.3.1 Positioning Analysis Level 1

The above quote indicates a couple of things Marilyn will highlight in her survey. She is satisfied with her experience, but not ecstatic, as Denzel was. This sense of balance is pervasive throughout the text. Working two jobs and taking a staggering course load at university also lets one know that she is an incredibly hard worker and that she needed a break. She also notes that she has learnt about South Africa, albeit, as we will see, not in the classroom.

Marilyn uses the second question to introduce the fact that "[she's] travelled abroad in Central America, Europe and Asia before". By doing so she positions herself as a world traveller and, therefore, an authority on cultural difference. This can be seen as a display of her power entrenched by accumulated social capital (cf. Bourdieu 51). This authoritative position is reinforced in the next question when she mentions that "[She] personally really enjoy[s]

quirky festivals and activities. Tourist-y stuff is nice, but what about a weekend at a backpackers in Kayalitsha? Why not go to the Aquarium (hint hint)?" She has evidently travelled extensively and sees past the 'normal' stuff.

It is not just as a person that she's experienced, but as a student too. She found that "class standards were minimal" and was disappointed with them. However, she goes on to state, "[she] felt like [she] got so much out of living in the dorms that the quality didn't matter". The theme of learning and the position of an autodidactic learner comes through strongly in Marilyn's survey. In her residence, Carpathia, she was "exchanging books with other students or staying up into the early hours having discussions about nearly every topic in the world from philosophy to aquatic sea life to Afrikaner identity." She argues that "transformation is a theme that can't be dealt with from a desk".

She also positions herself as a teacher "at a pre-primary school in Kayamandi" and evaluates that experience in an authoritative voice "there were definite issues such as size of classes, teaching in another language, the differing learning levels of various students". She mentions that she "got to design [the] curriculum" and points out that she has done it before (in high school). As I noted in the introduction to this section, Marilyn has just come of a semester working two jobs. She positions herself as a working adult, not just as a student.

Marilyn responds at length to Q34. She begins by noting that many South Africans seemed unable to grasp the fact that she "could simultaneously be Asian ethnically but have American citizenship at the same time". She shows that she can hold more than one identity at a time. She argues that this is the fault of the media who portray Americans as only white, middle class. Because of this, she claims that she was positioned as different and in demand, as she put it "exoticized or fetishized from an ethnocentric perspective". This exoticisation caused her to be "uncomfortable at times". However, she claims that she was "constantly bombarded

with admirers”, received many comments, and even relates a specific incident during a small story;

“But then again, it is flattering to have a police car pull over and have your university security guard buddies tell you that you’re looking great and to have a nice day before pulling away.”

This small story serves to construct herself as fetishized and set apart. However, she goes on to negate all this fetishization by thinking that “many might have thought I was South African”. She found that she was “bombarded with Afrikaans” and that some people thought she was coloured because she was quite tanned.

Marilyn introduces a couple of characters into her survey. The first is Burt who “really strived to get us to maximize our abroad experience to the fullest”. He also made her experience “as fabulous as possible, providing both support as well as a sounding board for being abroad.” Like Denzel and Lauren before her, she has mentioned Burt positively, in terms of support, but that’s where it ends. He has undoubtedly, for her, been a valuable part of her experience, but one gets the sense that the experience has been her own, and that he has played a peripheral role, unlike the positionings accorded him by Denzel and Lauren.

The lecturers for the IPSU courses are positioned as incompetent. They are “consistently late, unprepared, unclear, sometimes in an unfit condition to teach (one lecturer had clearly had a couple of drinks)” as well as unengaged. The standards were minimal and, as already mentioned, she got most of her learning outside of the class.

South Africans in general are mentioned quite frequently throughout the text. They are mentioned in conjunction with Carpathia (“the closest friends”) and prevent her from being “miserable”. The South African students in her English course with host nationals are positioned as juvenile. Most importantly, and very generally, she characterises many people (viz. South Africans) as “confused” about the way in which her ethnicity and citizenship are linked. She positions them as having difficulties with media portrayals, as fetishizing admirers

(even the police did it!) and as generally gawking at her. Like with Lauren's survey, Marilyn positions herself as superior, and as knowing more than the South Africans.

5.3.2 Positioning Analysis Level 2

Marilyn is quite aware that she's giving feedback to an institution as is evidenced in her very first answer where she replies directly to the first question²¹ with a 'no'. This is the only question in the survey that can provoke a yes or no answer and yet very few students respond in this way. Marilyn reads the survey quite closely and responds very carefully to all of the questions but one (it was non-applicable). She responds directly to a strengths/weaknesses question in the form "the main weakness... the strengths were...". This is also rare as most students just type responses quickly. She chooses three highlights and lays them out neatly in a numbered list. She also ensures that she answers all of the prompts in the last question, in the order of their asking (race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation).

She acts on this positioning in a measured way. She is extreme in her judgement of academic standards, but qualifies it by saying she learnt so much outside of class. She is extreme in describing the host nationals in her course as simple, and many South Africans as struggling and confused, but also mentions that some of them became her closest friends and helped her have penetrating discussions.

Marilyn is hyper-aware of herself and her surrounds. In response to this survey, she is not just a consumer giving feedback, but positions herself as something of an expert with real advice to give through her experience. As mentioned, she is well travelled, has "penetrating discussions", learns by herself, positions herself as above the classes offered by the university, uses Burt as support and a sounding board rather than as a leader and guide, and judges the South Africans as rather naïve and confused. She is positioning herself from the viewpoint of CIEE as an organisation. An organisation tasked with the education of international students.

²¹ Please see appendix.

5.3.3 Positioning Analysis Level 3

Marilyn positions herself with CIEE and in doing so she claims power. She is in a highly aware, intelligent individual from a country that has the highest standards in the classroom (cf. discussion of American hegemonic academic standards in *section 2.3.3*), knows about the differences between ethnicity and nationality, and the obtrusive influence of the media. Woolf (57) argues that

“A potential pitfall in terms of student mobility is, therefore, the assumption that educational systems across national boundaries fundamentally cohere... Failure to recognise difference or the bland assumption of shared purpose may lead to frustration and alienation unless understood and planned for within the development of international educational relations.”

She is a ‘global citizen’, widely travelled and therefore ‘more’ knowledgeable. She often positions herself as an expert who has obtained global citizenship, a Bourdieusian social capital, which is, according to Woolf (58) “some dreamed world that ignores the realities inherent in the limits of globalization”.

The South Africans in her stories are positioned variously. From some she has been able to learn, but others are naïve and confused. Because she is well travelled and comes from a superior position in the world, she allows herself to critically judge some South Africans as intellectually poor citizens who can’t know better. (cf. discussion of Schroeder, Wood, Galiardi and Koehn (2009) in *section 2.3.2*) Unlike many other students, she does not need a leader and a guide, but rather someone who can support her.

5.4 Recoding

The initial coding highlighted several themes, as well as the multiplicity of experiences. The above three positioning analyses were chosen as being particularly representative of the general themes and positions. Certain subject positions and themes are now carried forward

and checked against the larger data corpus. A general positioning analysis will now be executed, using the themes and positions highlighted by Lauren, Denzel, and Marilyn. At the first level, two sets of positions will be analysed, self-positions and positioning others. At the second level, the ways in which the respondents use these positionings interactively will be considered. At the final level, I will consider what this says about students and study abroad in general.

5.4.1 The self

As is to be expected when investigating narratives of experience, students positioned themselves strongly across the surveys. In order for the discussion to continue, these positionings have been grouped into: consumers and experts; volunteers, workers, and teachers; learning, growth, and transformation; insiders and outsiders; and gender. Though many students positioned themselves as international students, this subject position will be discussed together with their positioning of international students as a group because the two often appear together.

5.4.1.1 Consumers and experts

Students who explicitly position themselves as consumers (as opposed to a reactive positioning at level 2) are numerous in the data. These positions are characterised by a desire for choice, information, demands for various items, reports on quality, and even some mentions of the fact that they have paid money for this program. Furthermore, this category can be further subdivided into two groups; the pleased consumer, and the unhappy consumer, both of which mention the same things but in different lights. While the pleased consumer appears far more heavily during a level two analysis, it is the unhappy consumer who far more often reports explicitly.

Consumer reports range over all aspects of the program including; housing, food, classes, holidays, and excursions. Kate provides a balanced example of the emphasis on choice for excursions. She “understand[s] the two day hike up table mountain is no longer done” but recommends that “it may be useful to give the group a choice.” Excursions were a bone of contention for three students during the Spring semester in 2010. Audrey, Bette, and Katharine bemoan the fact that a trip was cancelled, arguing that the group was promised a trip. Katherine described is as “one of the selling points of the program.” Bette claimed that it was “supposed to be a part of our program and we paid for, which was disappointing.”

Julia, during the next semester has the same problem when “[s]ome of the activities were cancelled.” She also evaluates one of the other activities as “pretty boring”. Nor was that the only thing she was unhappy with. The CIEE students’ only course was not offered leading Julia to be “disappointed and annoyed”. She believes that there “should have been a way to figure it out.” She also “expected to be more comfortable as an international student [in Stellenbosch]” claiming that “[international students] should have been warned prior to the application that it was an unfriendly campus.” She claims that international students should be given special treatment²².

Kiera believes that she was misinformed;

“More specific information should have been given about the residences at the host institution so that I could have made a more informed decision when choosing housing. It would have been useful to know previous students' opinions of/experiences in housing.”

In fact, housing was one of the stronger themes throughout the data, not only being framed in terms of choice. There are many positive views on the housing situation that will be discussed in depth later.

²² Some more explicit examples can be found in Sandra, Al, and Tom’s surveys.

Connected to reports on housing are reports on the quality of the food. Julia states that the “food situation is unacceptable. We should have more say in how the money is used.” Jack says “the food in housing was not very good at all. There were very few options, and the options given were not even satisfactory. Maybe once a week, we would be able to eat the cafeteria food provided to us.”

Marlon states that “international students are somewhat limited (by language, structure and convenience) to the ISOS courses”, and that the “range of courses offered to international students is extremely restricted”. Others complained about a lack of choice for internships, a lack of computer access, and general information. Only two students reported positively at Level 1 in terms of choice and resources. Leonardo was pleased that during orientation the students “were made aware of the resources available” and Meryl noted that “the option to live with South Africans or other international students was given.”

Some consumers are meta-aware, offering ‘expert’ opinions. For example, Marlon argues;

“Furthermore, with courses offered only to international students, one is limiting one's exposure to new view-points, different cultures, etc... In other words, the real "meat and potatoes" of any study abroad programme.”²³

His is also a consumer report, but elevated to a level in which he is explicitly aware of the field of study abroad and its purpose and goals. Both Morgan and Angelina have a similar awareness. The former argues for more rigorous application procedures in order to ensure that “the students who are admitted to attend the program are very goal-driven and passionate about their time and experience [in Stellenbosch].” The latter argues that “Students should definitely all be housed with locals - imperative to the immersion within cultural understanding. More effort should be made to organize activities which students find both enjoyable and informative about the culture, etc.”

²³ See appendix for full response.

In summation: many students recognise that they are consumers, and many actively position themselves as such. When they position themselves explicitly as consumers, it is usually to complain about misinformation, a lack of choice, poor quality, and concerns about money. Some students not only position themselves as consumers, but also as experts. These consumers claim to know more about the product than other internationals, and make recommendations according to what they know.

Angelina, as one of these ‘experts’, has highlighted the concept of immersion, which speaks to the next large category of positions taken by students, the insider and/or outsider.

5.4.1.2 Insiders and outsiders

Many understand that they are an outsider by the very fact of their being an international student. In the previous section, Julia expected to be more comfortable *as an international student*. Sandra thought that international students should be placed only in “accepting and positive” areas of the residence hall. However, it is not just allusions to being an outsider that appear in the data. Students often position themselves explicitly as an outsider, especially as one who is trying to get in. Spatial metaphors are prominent, as are words such as ‘immersion’, ‘involvement’, and ‘integration’. The general rationale behind immersion is succinctly proposed by Robin; “[b]eing involved help me to understand South African community better.” Many note that immersion is a goal of their time abroad. George reports explicitly that his primary motivation was “[t]o immerse myself in South African culture by living with South Africans in a shared residence.”

Many find it difficult to integrate. Kate says “I don’t know if the program can do much about this, but I found it hard to integrate with South African students as much as I would have liked to.” Others’ comments allude that they would have liked to have been more immersed or

been given the opportunity to do more²⁴. Others, like Meryl, positively evaluate steps taken to teach immersion; “Burt taught us a lot about cultural immersion”. Ingrid thinks that the small program “helped [the group] integrate into the culture a bit better.”

The constant references to immersion reflects the argument that international students will become a part of the culture in which they are living. This however, is sometimes difficult. One student, Jack, explicitly wrestles with the difficulties of becoming a part of the community;

“But at the same time it hard to "blend" in as a South African. Regardless I experienced some sort exclusion specifically studying in Stellenbosch, because it was predominately white and I didn't speak Afrikaans. There were many social settings where it was more than just awkward and I felt that I didn't belong specially in particular residences on campus.”²⁵

For Jack, he wanted to immerse himself in the culture, but realised that this was difficult. He couldn't “blend in”. He also experienced exclusion on the grounds of his race and language. Nevertheless, he realised that he has learnt something that he couldn't have experienced elsewhere.

5.4.1.3 Learning, growth, and transformation

Where the above respondents mostly mourn not being immersed enough, others imply that they have learnt plenty by being in Stellenbosch. Kiera is a key respondent in understanding the positioning of oneself as having grown or transformed.

“I grew as a student, as a teacher, as a development worker, and as human being. [The CEM course] provided invaluable insight into the lives of community members and helped me to become involved with the community in a meaningful and mutually-beneficial way.”

²⁴ E.g. Leonardo (Q12), Jodie (Q16), and Emma (Q8, Q12, Q16, Q32, Q33).

²⁵ Full response in Jack's survey, Q34.

Kiera highlights various positions she has taken since being in South Africa. She also blurs the lines between learning and growth. It is from an academic module that she has learnt, and that has enabled her to grow. However, not all students feel the same way. Some, like Marilyn, position themselves as far better students than the quality that many courses cater for. Sandra states that “neither the students nor the professors cared about the courses. I learned almost nothing in them. They were unbearably boring and useless.”

Others are fairer in their evaluation, understanding that things are different in different places. Sylvester says that “[m]ost of the courses weren't too difficult, but were unique, interesting and focused on aspects unique to South Africa.” Another number of students really enjoyed their classes. Kiera, for example, argues that “the classes taught [her] a great deal about the country [she] was studying in.

Another group of students argue that while the level is lower, they didn't mind as it enabled them to spend more time learning outside of the classroom. As Vivien says;

“My classes were not too academically challenging nor did they require much time so I was able to really go out and experience South Africa. I thought this was a strength because I did not come to Stellenbosch to study, but rather learn and experience the culture first hand by getting out and interacting with people.”

The idea that learning took place outside of the classroom is strong in the data.²⁶ While some frame their learning explicitly as learning, others talk about it in terms of growth and transformation. Reese feels “[he has] made a major transformation”.²⁷

5.4.1.4 Volunteers, workers, and teachers

One of the biggest sites of interaction (or immersion) for students is during their optional volunteering projects, or with the CEM module. Of 19 students who mentioned their

²⁶ E.g. Julie, Morgan, Ingrid.

²⁷ Cf. Hugh, Leonardo, Viggo, and Robert.

volunteering, all but one appraised it positively (Jack just listed his involvements and said he was too involved). Some typical responses would include “I loved working in Kayamandi, I would recommend it to all the future students” (Elizabeth) and “Volunteering in Kayamundi was a great was to experience a very different side of Stellenbosch” (Morgan).²⁸

Only two of the students who had praised their volunteering experience, qualified their positive response. Both found the volunteering to be both rewarding but difficult. Katharine said “Involved in the Pebbles project, which was wonderful, but it was extremely difficult without a background in Afrikaans so I would be hesitant to recommend it to future students.” Vivien concurred with Katharine’s trouble with language;

“I worked at Pebbles Project - while I enjoyed it immensely and found it rewarding, I would not recommend future students to work there. My lack of ability to speak Afrikaans significantly hindered my ability to truly help the students and teachers at the Pebbles Project after-school program. Many times I just felt in the way and wished I had done other service where I could really be of use.”

Both feel as though they are excluded on the grounds of language, even though they claim to have enjoyed the experience.

Many of those who mentioned their volunteering positioned themselves as workers or teachers, rather than as volunteers or learners. Four characterise themselves as teachers, one as a coach, and several as having been doing “work”.

5.4.1.5 Gender

In addition to Lauren and Marilyn, five students reported on gender. Three explicitly stated they were female while the other two had general comments on the nature of gender in South Africa. Emma seemed nonplussed by the differences, stating that “I had doors opened a lot for me because I am a woman. That’s pretty much it!” Kiera felt less safe in Stellenbosch, stating

²⁸ Cf. also Robert, Charlize, and Kate.

that she had to “take many more precautions than [she takes at her] home institutions, for security reasons.” Helena relates an incident in which a group of drunk disruptive guys came into their campsite; “some of use [sic] girls tried to get them to go away. They would not listen to us however because we were female.”

Although there is no way of knowing the gender of Diane, s/he does mention that;

“women should be better informed about the prejudices they will face. I was not unaware of this before coming to South Africa, but I really did not realize the extent of it until I got here, but then again I guess it might be something that you have to experience.”

Jodie was also surprised by the differences in gender norms in South Africa, and suggested that “gender relationships... should be discussed in the orientation just to give students a heads up.”

5.4.2 Others

The other characters that most of the students mentioned in the surveys were surprisingly uniform. Very few characters are mentioned by name. The only consistent exceptions to this rule are the CIEE Stellenbosch staff as well as CIEE as an organisation. Together they are mentioned by 30 students. Another large group mentioned is ‘international students’. However, the largest group of characters is the ‘South African’. This group has been aggregated because this is what the overwhelming majority of respondents do. Of the 33 surveys that explicitly mention ‘locals’, ‘South Africans’, the ‘local communities’, or ‘people in Stellenbosch’, very seldom are individuals or smaller groups mentioned. The positionings of these three groups will now be discussed.

5.4.2.1 CIEE and staff

CIEE as an organisation is not explicitly mentioned as often as one would assume, given the fact that the students are on a CIEE program, see CIEE staff very often, and are responding to

a CIEE survey. They are, however, mentioned explicitly several times. A majority position CIEE as incredibly helpful, being described as “the biggest help” (Diane), “helpful” (Ingrid) and by Helena as a good choice. Morgan is far more enthusiastic in his appraisal, stating that “based on everything we’ve heard from other students on other programs, the excursions, intimacy, and overall experience that CIEE provides far surpasses anything else [in Stellenbosch].”²⁹

Although, as we’ve seen in Lauren’s case study, some people do express dissatisfaction with CIEE, it is mostly done without mention of the organisation’s name. One other student does position CIEE explicitly, though. Jack claims that “the cost of food, and travel were grossly underestimated by CIEE” and also did not “believe the CIEE program readily allow for a internship while studying abroad, as there seemed to be little connections and/or agencies to pair students with independent studies or internships”.

Many implicit mentions are made in response to questions addressing the performance of CIEE. These implicit responses will be discussed in the combined level two analysis.

The positioning of CIEE staff is much more uniform and recurs heavily in the data. This is despite the fact that there is a question (removed from this analysis for ethical reasons) in the survey devoted to appraising CIEE staff members.

100% of respondents who mentioned CIEE staff members appraised them positively. Not only were the staff members some of the most recurrent characters in the surveys, they were often mentioned numerous times by each respondent. John, the secondary advisor, was not a CIEE staff member in 2009 and therefore only appears in the data from 2010. Burt was the head advisor for the entire time. One other temporary staff member, Calvin, is mentioned once as a highlight of the program in Fall 2009.

²⁹ Cf. also, Reese and Orson.

Burt is positioned variously as “resourceful” (Elizabeth), as a highlight of the program (Julie, Marlon, Diane, Morgan, Judi, and many others), as “great”, “excellent”, “wonderful”, and/or “superb” (Emma, Morgan, Mark, Angelina, Kiera, and more). He is also described as an excellent facilitator, as being extremely helpful in the provision of information, and often as a guide or mentor. A longer extract from Emma’s survey provides more perspective.

“Burt has been WONDERFUL about addressing this theme. One of the first things that we did was write letters to ourselves about our thoughts and feelings coming into South Africa and our goals for our time in the country, which he gave back at our farewell dinner. He also wrote us letters himself about the ways in which we have grown, and he has reminded us that we are changing throughout our time with him.”³⁰

Emma highlights how excellent Burt has been. He is positioned as someone with whom the student can grow, as knowledgeable, as a leader (he prepares them). The idea that Burt is an excellent leader, guide or mentor is one of the stronger recurring themes throughout the data. The single marginally dissenting voice is Angelina who says that even though “John and Burt were lovely with responses... their input when unsolicited may have been beneficial to those not outwardly challenging their experience with questions.”

When John enters the frame in 2010, he is most often mentioned in conjunction with Burt. Their positioning as a team is almost identical to that of Burt alone. They are “kind and patient personalities... excellent people for this job” (Alec) and “an excellent team of director/assistant that offered guidance and assistance, without whom this experience would not have been complete” (Sidney)³¹.

The CIEE staff is therefore positioned as integral parts to the student’s experiences while abroad.

³⁰ Full response in appendix.

³¹ Cf. Also Al and Angelina

5.4.2.2 International Students

Very few students describe themselves as ‘an international student’. However, many identify themselves as such implicitly throughout the survey. Before discussing ‘international student’ positioning, it is necessary to clarify some issues of scale. Students often refer to themselves and others as international students in the context of the CIEE Stellenbosch group. That is, they are international students, but a small, ‘special’ group of them. Others, however, talk about international students in general. That is either an idealized ‘international student’ or referentially to all other international students of their cohort at Stellenbosch University. Attitudes to the former are more often than not positive. Attitudes about the latter can be very negative.

Leonardo is very positive to the CIEE group and found that “the sense of companionship I gained with the other program participants is something that I could and would not trade for anything.” Judi mentioned bonding with the group as a highlight, as did Emma.³² This would seem to corroborate similar findings amongst American student group identification by Talburt and Stewart (1999) and Twombly (1995).

Audrey, however, is a little more ambivalent about the situation.

“My experience was very different than I had expected largely because my best friends here were all American. While I kind of regret that, I feel like the other program participants were sharing in the experience with me and we were all eager to learn and try new things together. I grew more personally as a result of my bonds with the other program participants that I did with any others. That being said I was still able to learn immense amounts about the country that changed my perspective on daily life.”

She had come expecting to meet plenty of South Africans and to form strong friendships with them. While this did not happen, she feels as though the group was a comfortable space from

³² Al, Kate, and Sidney are other examples of positive identification with the CIEE group.

which to learn. The respondents generally position themselves favourably as a CIEE group member. It is considered something positive to belong to the group. More evidence of this is how well the students rate the CIEE staff, as they are considered group members (in a restricted sense) too.

Other international students are often positioned negatively; as in the way. For example, Emma states that s/he chose Stellenbosch specifically because “[s/he] thought that there would be less international students at Stellenbosch than at Cape Town”. As we saw earlier in Marlon’s expert report, he believes that living, and taking classes with, other international students, is not compatible with the goals of study abroad.

“Indeed, the living situation in Titanic (which, apparently, CIEE also uses for housing on occasion) would not have been at all equal, in terms of exposure to local culture, facilitating the development of friendships and relations with local students, to living in Carpathia. As a result of its geographical location in town, as well as its cost, Titanic often feels more like a holding pen for international students than an actual residence hall. This was confirmed by all the other international students that I met, most of whom lived in Titanic. They were not at all as much “in the thick of it” and mostly resorted to doing things with other international students.”

Although Marilyn admits that she is an international student, she positions large groups of international students as a barrier to developing relationships with South Africans.³³

There was just one dissenting view; Shia “enjoyed taking classes with students from different countries”. However, the majority of respondents who mention international students seem to want to dissociate with the group ‘international students’. They really want to associate with South Africans.

³³ See also Jack and Orson.

5.4.2.3 South Africans

South Africans are treated as a large entity because of how they appear in the data. The survey respondents seldom mention individual South Africans, though they do at times mention racial and/or ethnic groups.

Elizabeth states that “living and working with the South African students” was a highlight. She “loved taking classes with regular students”, “met wonderful people and had an incredible experience in the dorms and in the classroom”. Her position is corroborated by Leonardo who found “nothing but family in South Africa. Afrikaans, Xhosa, European, American, fathers, sons, friends, brothers sisters” and “felt welcomed by all these people”. Julie found them kind and numerous students positioned South Africans as friends or as highlights of their experience.³⁴

However, many students experienced some kind of separation from South Africans and felt they didn’t meet enough locals or make enough friends. Although Julie met South Africans and liked them, she still wanted the option to “take more classes with actual Stellenbosch students”. Diane expresses disappointment that s/he didn’t know that “the Residence Hall housing option was with other South African Students and that Lusitania was with more international students”. Her remark is almost perfectly echoed by Bette who wishes she “would have known that in Lusitania you do not meet South Africans.”³⁵

Many students struggled with “South African” problems. George notes that in terms of gender, “SA, and Africa generally, is quite paternalistic”. Kate found that local students were “polite but not engaging” and noted that;

“It is a very different country. In terms of race, though not effected negatively, racism was everywhere especially in a town like Stellenbosch. It is something that I was not completely prepared

³⁴ E.g. Marlon, Morgan, Judi, Emma, Charlize, Sidney, and Robin

³⁵ There are numerous other examples in Bette’s survey.

for, and I was accosted many times in terms of views on race that I did not agree with. Gender relations are still tricky here, it is very traditional and can be hard to get used to.”

Stellenbosch (and its locals) are often positioned as racist and as having trouble with gender dynamics. Sylvester relates that he found

“many white South students in Stellenbosch held racist attitudes... when you really got to know many of the white students, you found that they held negative attitudes towards non-white people. [He] met a number of students who told [him] straight up that they “hate black people””.

Al “dealt with a lot of opposition to [her] gender and sexual orientation”. In fact she had much to say about the locals;

“Many people didn't understand the idea of genderqueer or the fact that a female could be gay... In terms of race, I found there to be a significant amount of blatant, in-your-face racism, which was extremely powerful for me to see. I think that a lot of the white community in Stellenbosch is still really conservative with their beliefs. I saw fights emerge as a result of inter-racial couples and such.”

George, Kate, Sylvester, and Al (and others not quoted here) all make relatively balanced judgements about the locals, however, there was a group of several students who, in line with Lauren's judgement, positioned Stellenbosch locals and/or South Africans as obnoxious. In particular, many from the Fall group of 2010 positioned locals quite extremely. Sandra claims that “Stellenbosch is the most racist, homophobic, sexist place [she has] ever been to”.³⁶

In conclusion: South Africans are positioned as different. Sometimes they are positioned as ignorant, racist and sexist, at others just as ‘not like us’. Sometimes this difference is a good thing, and South Africans are a group, people from which have become friends. For other respondents, they are despicable. Though there may seem to be no overarching features, a more coherent picture starts to emerge at a level two positioning analysis.

³⁶ Grace and Julia provide two more examples.

5.4.3 Positioning Level Two

The positions outlined above always work interactively. They are produced in relation to other positions, whether in congruence or reactively against. Though an argument can be made for the complex interactivity of the various positions can be made, that is best left to the next level of analysis. This section will consider three sets of positions: the relationship between the student consumer and CIEE; the relationship between transformation, learning, volunteerism, and the CIEE staff; and the relationship between insiders, outsiders, international students and South Africans.

5.4.3.1 Student consumers and CIEE

The link between student consumers and CIEE is the most obvious relationship. It is obvious because the study abroad period is organised by CIEE, because many activities during the semester are carried out as a CIEE group, and because the survey is administered by CIEE in terms of customer feedback. The consumer position is characterised by the desire for information and choice. If the student is well informed s/he is in a position to make a good choice. For example, Leonardo omits the first question³⁷ He responds to the second question about strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation validating the information given; “we were made aware of the resources that were available to us” and acknowledges, by use of the word “resources”, that the options were there. Because he had both choice and information, his survey was very positive, activities were “incredible”, the program was “wonderful”, and “[a]ll-in-all [it is] really hard to go wrong in Stellenbosch.”

If the information or options are lacking, the student cannot make a choice and the experience is a negative one. For example, Bette responds to the first question negatively; “I would have appreciated knowing it’s such a small group and that there are not any program activities that take you out of Stellenbosch/Cape Town.” Later, she also wishes that “[she] would have

³⁷ Please refer to appendix

known that in Lusitania you do not meet South Africans” and wishes that “someone would have explained what a cultural opportunity [taking classes with locals] would be”. She also thought that there would be more opportunities for volunteering and to meet South African students. This misinformed student is far more negative about her experience, listing various things she thought the group was going to do but didn’t this was “a very big disappointment”. She also rues the fact that “meeting South Africans was very hard for [her] to do”. This sense of disappointment, coupled with a high level of consumer position-taking, is echoed by East (2001:7) who noted that “the student who was the least satisfied was keen that students should have customer rights.”

Although the two examples given above can be seen as opposing views, it is important not to fall into seeing binaries in the data. Rather these examples are offered as two poles of a continuum which charts extreme happiness (cf. Denzel’s individual positioning analysis) with choice, information and experience at the positive pole, and extreme unhappiness (cf. Lauren’s individual positioning analysis) with the same factors at the negative.

Julie is an example of a student who lies in a more middling position, positively appraising the CIEE orientation which “covered important and useful information”, but complaining that she did not know that “Afrikaans is still such a strong component of the host university’s language, resulting in it being difficult to take mainstream courses.” Yet she still evaluates her “experience with this program [as] very positive and extremely beneficial in [her] life”.³⁸

Many students are happy with both the amount of information they are given and the choices they have been able to make. Happy consumers give positive feedback in direct reply to questions on the survey. They praise CIEE’s work in many aspects: the selection of community engagement options; the cultural program; the residences; and the CIEE staff. However, some students are unhappy with the information they were given, believing that

³⁸ Cf. Diane as another prominent example.

they could not make good choices. Some unhappy customers do not report on misinformation, but only on a lack of choice. Other unhappy customers report negatively on quality – of courses, cancellations, food, and residences.

What so many students are doing is taking on the position of consumer who has paid CIEE to do a job (i.e. provide them with a cultural experience). The survey itself is an example of this relationship. CIEE offers the position “consumer” to the student, and then many students take this position up. In this sense, it is not only “institutional demands on the identity”, as outlined by Lemke (2008:31-34) but rather *institutional possibilities for the identity*. The happy consumers accord praise to CIEE for having done a good job, while the unhappy consumers blame CIEE for not having done a good enough job. In doing this, many students remove self-responsibility from the educational process. It is worth bearing in mind the quote from Naidoo (2003:253) that was used in Chapter 2:

“Such research reports that the consumer mentality in students has resulted in a loss of responsibility for their learning, an instrumental attitude to their work, an unwillingness to be judged and little tolerance for the expansion of study beyond the routine and the predictable.”

While this “instrumental attitude” does appear in many students’ reports, it must be noted that not all students feel this way. Some students articulate the idea that they must be more responsible for their own learning. For example, Audrey states that

“While I definitely think some details about Stellenbosch were left out in the orientation process, such as that the dorm food is disgusting, I think that was appropriate in order to allow me to figure things out for myself once I arrived.”

He realises that some things meant to be learnt in a cultural experience, must be experienced by the student, rather than told to the student by the provider. In a similar, yet different, vein Leonardo articulates that it was good to be made aware of the resources on hand, “however, we were encouraged to reach outside our comfort and see our community”. He acknowledges

that support and information was in place, but that some things needed to be sought by the student. These students are the “active educational partners” rather than the “passive recipients” Franz (1998:68) was referring to. This remark is reflected by Marlon when he states that

“students must willingly be curious about all that they see and experience. You can promote and encourage, but it’s a decision and attitude that the student must ultimately, perhaps sadly, adopt of his or her own volition.”

5.4.3.2 Transformation, learning and South Africans

As many students have made clear, they believe that they learn more outside of class, specifically when they are with South Africans (immersed). ‘Authentic’ engagement with South Africans brings the transformation and learning that they are (ostensibly) in South Africa for. The CIEE survey, I argue, does not actually position the student as a learner. There are some mentions of academics, but even these questions are framed as consumer report questions. These require evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and qualities, rather than asking what actual learning occurred. It is striking, then, that so many students do position themselves as ‘learners’, or, at least, as people who ‘grew’ from the experience. As Vivien states;

“My classes were not too academically challenging nor did they require much time so I was able to really go out and experience South Africa. I thought this was a strength because I did not come to Stellenbosch to study, but rather learn and experience the culture first hand by getting out and interacting with people.”

She has outlined a difference between ‘study’ on the one hand, and learning a culture, on the other. For her, the real learning occurs by getting to know South Africans. As was shown in section 5.4.2.3., meeting South Africans is important to many students and many of them agree that it is because this is how they will learn about South Africa and South African

cultures. Charlize thinks it was “a learning experience in itself being in class with South Africans”. Importantly here, the learning experience is not the class, but rather the fact that the class contained South Africans. Ingrid concurs;

“I have learned so much about myself and feel like I understand so many aspects of SA. Some things I would have done differently (I wish I took a mainstream class), but as far as meeting people, learning the customs, seeing SA, and understanding my own personal capabilities, I could not have wished for anything more!”

She states that she has learnt so much about herself and South Africa, and then located the learning in “meeting people, learning the customs, seeing SA”.

Volunteering or working on community projects is another site of learning by proximity to South Africans. Not many of the students make it explicit why they loved their volunteering duties, but the fact that most mention groups such as ‘locals’, ‘Kayamandi’, and ‘the community’, one can surmise that it was because of their involvement with locals. The one student who does make it very explicit, is a key informant here;

“Being at Pebbles was remarkable. I can't even do the experience justice by trying to explain how amazing it was to work with my class on uBuntu wine farm. My class was an amazing bunch of kids who taught me so much. I enjoyed going there every week and spending time with them. The kids at uBuntu helped make my experience abroad so great. I loved every one of them and already miss them so much.”

If learning about a culture is so strongly tied to meeting locals, if learning about a culture is something promised to customers, and if learning is understood in Franz's “passive recipient” sense, then it is no surprise that many students resume the position of consumer when they experience disappointment in either not meeting enough South Africans, or finding South Africans that they meet ‘unsatisfactory’.

Emma found that the CIEE orientation “kept [the students] from participating in Stellenbosch’s new student orientation, which would most likely been very important to our integration into South African student life.” The same student also requested that activities be added that brought students “closer to the peoples of South Africa”. While Audrey enjoyed the program activities, she felt that it “prevented me from getting to know people in my dorm because we missed a lot of the initial bonding activities”. Kiera has a similar view; “it would have been nice if they had facilitated more opportunities for us to meet South African students”. All three experienced disappointment in not having learnt as much as they would have liked. Emma’s goals were only met “to some extent”, Audrey stated that although she did learn an immense amount, the experience was different than she had expected, and the sentence preceding Kiera’s quote above was “The program helped me to fulfill many, if not most, of my expectations.” The conclusion to be drawn from this is that more of her expectations would have been fulfilled had she been able to meet more South Africans.

Some students displayed various degrees of dislike or hate towards the South Africans they met. These students, like Lauren (cf. her individual positioning analysis), position the South Africans as ignorant and odious. A group from the Fall semester in 2010 felt this way very strongly. As just one example, Grace found ‘racism and ignorance towards the LGBTQ community frequently’. This was her reply to one of only two completed questions. The other answer she gave was when asked her motivation for choosing this program, to which she replied ‘cost’. Sandra thought Stellenbosch was “the most racist, homophobic, sexist place [she] had ever been to”. She continues;

“The classes were terrible and a complete waste of time. Neither the students nor the professors cared about the courses. I learned almost nothing in them. They were unbearably boring and useless. They were simply frustrating due to the level of apathy and ignorance of the student body and teaching staff.”

She learned almost nothing in the classes, and the student body and professors were ‘apathetic and ignorant’. The common thread in these and similar negative reports is that they all have two basic premises. Firstly, the South Africans are positioned as vile and ignorant. Secondly, the students position themselves as extremely dissatisfied learners and customers. Where many students find that they learn an enormous amount from exposure to South Africans, others find that they learn nothing from South Africans.

It would seem from the data that meeting South Africans is seen as important to students for learning about South Africa. Some are open to the differences and position themselves as learners, and people who have been transformed or who have grown. For these students, they report to CIEE positively, happy with the experiences facilitated. For those who are not open to the differences, they position themselves as disappointed consumers who have hated the experience and seem to blame CIEE.

Another, related, locus of students’ unhappiness can often be attributed to their positions as an outsider (international student) in comparison to the insiders (South Africans).

5.4.3.3 Insiders, outsiders; International, South African

Immersion, as seen above, is important to the students. Immersion is a service that many feel CIEE ought to be providing for them. Many unhappy students report that they were not able to be immersed, or involved. Some other unhappy students were able to be immersed, but disliked what they found when they were immersed; housing, South African conservatism, perceived racism, and sexism are prominent problems for this group. In these cases, CIEE is called on to provide protection or more information to prevent this happening. Happy students report positively on their immersion experience, and like the South Africans they encountered, even when, at times, they have found things difficult going. This set of students

has found that immersion brings difference to the fore, and have decided to learn from this difference.

This difference is located in ‘international student-ness’. The international student is an outsider, trying to get into South African-ness by way of immersion. The position of ‘International student’ is a tension-filled one. Many students rely on the position of international student to claim certain rights or privileges.

However, they may also position themselves as apart from the other international students, as different, or separate. For example, Julia states that one of the reasons she chose to come to Stellenbosch was because it had “less international students”. This signals that she wanted to immerse herself in South African culture. However, after a very negative survey, she answers question 34 in the following manner; “i expected to be more comfortable as an international student here. we should have been warned prior to the application that it was an unfriendly campus.” For her, the experience should have been “comfortable”, that is a right she claims as an international student. Furthermore, international students should be “warned” that the campus is “unfriendly”. However, considering the glowing reports given by numerous students, we either have to believe that she met all the ‘wrong’ South Africans, or, more simply, that it is just her perception that campus is unfriendly. This conjecture is made more probable when one considers what she had to say about the CIEE orientation; “it helped me get a basic understanding of the small cultural differences between South African and American culture”. If she thought that the difference between South African and American culture (not to mention the different cultures in each) was small, then she is in denial as to the far more complex situation. The hybridity in her discourse perhaps is partly reflective of the hybridity of her experience. To put it more simply, that which she perceived as general unfriendliness may only be unfriendly when read through an American cultural lens.

Sidney also chose Stellenbosch for its perceived potential for immersion; “I specifically wanted to be in a dorm alongside other South African students. I achieved this and couldn't have been more pleased.” She also found it was “a good experience to sit along side host nationals in one of my classes, though I would have liked more classes like this”. Even though she managed to immerse herself (to an extent), she also claims rights as an international student; “The grading system was especially confusing, as the lecturers did not know how to grade us appropriately in order for us to get credit.” Note that the grading system is confusing, but it is not characterised as different, or South African. The lecturers “*did not know*” how to grade international students in order for the international students to get credit. Effectively she has said she came to South Africa to be immersed, however, when facets of the immersion bother her, those facets should be more like what she is used to.

The themes of lecturers’ being “unmotivated”, “apathetic”, or just plain “useless” and that the courses are not “challenging” enough, are recurrent. However, many students do not claim this, or, indeed evaluate the courses positively. Once again, it might be helpful to consider that for all the talk of immersion, and cultural understanding, some students do not perceive teaching and grading styles as part of a different culture, but rather as inferior versions of the American style. (cf. again the section on American hegemony in international higher education, *section 2.3.3*)

However, there are students who understand the differences. In evaluation of international student classes, Diane feels the classes were “isolated and too similar to American classes”. She feels boxed in with internationals, and by implication, kept apart from South Africans. However, she evaluates the classes with South African students more positively because “they highlighted issues that the American education system hardly does or in a different way”. She, the outsider, wants to be immersed, to be on the inside. She also states that “Stellenbosch is an

ideal place for study abroad because it allows you to explore another part of South Africa not really known to Americans”. Similarly, Marlon, one of our experts, says

“As a result of [all the international students’ being clustered together], professors tended to “pitch”, or present, their class in a more Americanised fashion. This is, once again, not what I went abroad for. If I wanted an American-style class, I could have stayed home. Let the entire affair, class, style and content be truly immersive.”

It is perhaps no surprise that students who reported views (a dissociation from international student-ness) like Diane and Marlon tend to report more positive experiences. They also position themselves as people who learnt or grew, far more regularly than those who position themselves as international students with rights. These latter students also tend to position themselves as consumers more often than those who position themselves as learners. It is now to these larger questions that I turn.

5.4.4 Positioning level 3

I will now describe a ‘typical experience’ in the hope that it will introduce complexity into the agglomerated reading of the 46 respondents’ surveys used as data in this project. I started this chapter by deconstructing an “extreme” story, and will now attempt to reconstruct the “typical story”. I will then move on to answer the question “how do the students construct their identities?” by relating my own analysis to relevant theory.

5.4.4.1 The typical story

Belinda is a hypothetical student from the United States of America. A complex combination of factors has led her to decide to study abroad. She is a typical candidate in that she is a white, female undergraduate, 1 of no more than 300,000 American students to study abroad a year. She may be predisposed to study abroad for a variety of reasons including the accumulation of social-cultural capital (Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, and Pascarella 2009),

perceived career value, and for the purported transformative learning experience (Goel, De Jong, and Schnusenberg 2010). By now it is relatively common knowledge that potential employers see value in the study abroad experience, Belinda hopes to capitalise on this. With the rapid increase in Study Abroad marketing as part of a concerted push by the field to reach the magical 1 million students abroad a year, Belinda has found it quite easy to access information on various programs around the world. Study abroad as a field, have tied international education to “Securing America’s Future” (NAFSA 2003). Intercultural education has receded to the background as it is often assumed that just being immersed in another culture will bring the claimed benefits of culture understanding etc., even though some research would indicate otherwise. The marketing Belinda has experienced promises “improved intercultural knowledge and skills”, becoming a “global citizen”, and exploration and adventure. Belinda is excited at all of these options and sets about finding a service-provider. CIEE is one of the oldest, most widespread, and helpful service-providers in the field. CIEE, like other organisations, offers immersive cultural experiences, and has a broad array of programs around the world. Belinda doesn’t want to be grouped with a large number of American students, as believes this will impact her immersion (Talbert and Stewart 1999). She therefore chooses both a non-traditional location and a small program, at Stellenbosch University. She starts submitting very many documents needed for studying abroad. During this time she is handled by an advisor from CIEE’s head office in Portland, USA. She gains additional information on the program, chooses housing, completes assessments, writes an application outlining her goals and intentions, and generally submits a whole number of items. She also pays a deposit and waits. Provided she meets a set of requirements, Belinda is accepted into the program. Finally she pays the full amount of over \$12,000. She may or may not be helped by study aid, or by her home university. She flies out to South Africa a couple of months later and lands at Cape Town International Airport where she is met by a CIEE staff member and taken to her accommodation. She feels that her experience has now begun.

The first week is orientation. She appreciates the information and choices offered to her, but may desire more. She enjoys the time spent with fellow CIEE students, all also American, and is encouraged to bond with the group by an extensive set of activities. However, like many Americans, she is independent and wishes to break away from this group to immerse herself in South African culture. When she meets South Africans, they often bring her American-ness to the fore, forcing her to critically examine herself from a cultural perspective (Dolby 2008). She continues attending the many CIEE arranged cultural activities which are designed to show the students different facets of South Africa. This, combined with the need for support, increases her desire for group bonding (Talbert and Stewart 1999; Twombly 1995). During this time she continues to be powerfully challenged by a reverse critical gaze and starts to understand more about herself as an American, complicit in all the privileges being an American brings (Mathers 2008). She carries on getting to know as many South Africans as she can, and starts to discover cultural differences. She is tempted to compare everything to what she knows, through an ethnocentric lens. Because she is from America, she is from a dominant ideology, a hegemonic educational culture which presents American cultural values and assumptions as the best (e.g. Kim 2011a, 2011b). She knows about the university rankings and general reputation of American universities, and may be troubled by the perceived lack of quality in the classroom. She may be troubled by several intercultural stress factors. In Stellenbosch, she may be bothered by the disparity between black and white, the poverty, the different gender norms, and other remnants of a highly patriarchal and racist apartheid system. She may also be bothered by more quotidian problems such as less public transport, different food, a slower pace of life, and different communication styles. She comes across all of this and more in classes, at volunteering sites, in discussions with South Africans, and in her residence. Through all this, staff members from an American organisation try and help her with her questions and intercultural difficulties. These staff members are shining lights, guides who help her navigate the difficult and muddy cultural waters.

5.4.4.2 Possibilities

It should be recognised that the Belinda described above can never be a 100% accurate characterisation, but rather an empirically grounded but generalised representation of common experience. She displays many of the positions and concerns that the students in our data did, albeit at the middle ground of a continuum. The two most prominent reflexive positions in the data are the learner and the consumer. In reality, all students are both, however, these contrasting positions are used interactively by students to construct their identities. Several other positions are complexly interwoven with one or either of these positions to provide a fuller picture.

The field of study abroad, and, in this case, CIEE, positions students both as students who have to take academic courses and are here to learn about cultural difference, as well as consumers, who have paid for an experience including housing, academics, activities, support, and other opportunities. The survey I have used is an example of both of these positionings but generally leans towards the consumer, rather than the student. Students, in contrast, take up a multiplicity of positions, however, ‘studentness’ or ‘consumerness’ are often foregrounded.

The majority of students want to be immersed, as that is where cultural learning is supposed to be. However, learning about another culture entails learning about oneself too. When the students start learning about another culture, they are affected by a powerful reverse-gaze (Mathers 2008), and experience severe difference. Depending on what stage of intercultural sensitivity they are at (the standard is Bennett 1993; cf. Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova, and DeJaeghere 2003), they will react differently to this difference. Bennett’s six stages along a continuum range from most ethnocentric to most ethnorelative. Those who are ethnocentric will deny cultural difference exists or universalise certain values, defend their own culture, or

may minimize the differences experienced. Those who are more ethnorelative will accept the differences, start to adapt to the differences, and finally, possibly integrate in the new culture.

The students who display the most ethnocentrism in the surveys, are also those who complain as a consumer the most. These students believe in the hegemony of American education and compare everything they experience to an American standard. Because they are consumers, and because they are used to consuming the American standard, they use intricate combinations of the positions of international student and consumer to demand more from CIEE. CIEE, in some ways, position themselves as service-providers who are selling something to the students, thereby positioning the students as customers. As Lemke (2008:31) notes; “[there are] technologies by which social institutions, through the practices they afford for us and the practices of control exercised by others playing roles within them, attempt to shape and control our identities.” In this framework, some students have adopted an instrumental orientation to learning. For these students, cultural difference is not something to be learned from, but is rather subsumed under ‘inadequate service-provision’. The student is saying that s/he wants to learn but she wants to learn as she has come to expect in the American framework.

The students who display the most ethnorelativism more often construct themselves as learners. When they encounter difference, it is a good thing, a learning opportunity which is, after all, why they came to South Africa in the first place. They are still consumers and positively praise CIEE for the provision of services. However, the locus of responsibility is less often placed on external actors such as CIEE and South Africans. These students position themselves as independent learners who are here to gather as much of the experience as they can. The two paragraphs above outline two poles of a continuum. In reality, students may fall somewhere in between the two characterisations, which is reflective of the multiplicity of identities that students have access to.

5.5 Conclusion

This analysis has tried to tread between the problems of micro and macro analyses (cf. Korobov 2001). Koehne (2005:104) has called for research on international students to allow for “the diversity of subjectivities that international students (re)construct” so as to “begin a process of exploding international education out of limited and constricted binarisms that are so often used in talking about what it is.” However, it is acknowledged in this analysis that some of those subjectivities (or positions) are taken up by numerous students, allowing for a tentative reading of trends.

At a general level, this research confirms the suspicions of Shroeder et al. (2009) that some international students may express privilege, use stereotypes, and construct themselves as ‘superior’. They may position themselves as part of the hegemonic American education system, demanding full rights even though in a different cultural situation. Some ascribed duties both to CIEE and to the locals according to what they expect.

Many realise that they are outsiders (cf. Urban and Orbe 2007), and this research provides some substantiation to the theory that students form minority group identities when abroad (Schmitt, Spears, and Branscombe 2003). This group identity, in many ways fostered by the way CIEE positions itself and the students, is used by the students to make claims and assign duties. However, students find ways to resist positions and this resistance allows for new learning possibilities (cf. Lemke 2008:34-39)

The students use ‘small stories’ (e.g. Bamberg 1997) to construct identities in the making. These small stories aggregate to afford the students a sense of identity. It is noted that the students in this research have displayed multiple, fragmented identities in agreement with current conceptualisations of identity. Themes and repeated subject position-taking allow students to perform (e.g. Pennycook) identities. Repetitive performance, or iteration, allows for a facet of identity to be foregrounded. For many, the foregrounded identity is a consumer,

for some it may be the identity of 'learner'. Often, in the case of the former, this identity is used to undermine the goals of study abroad. It is suggested that the field itself contributes to its own undermining by offering the subject position 'consumer' to the student.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I began this thesis by noting that the mobility around the world is rising. Global flows of people, technologies, and ideas are increasing during this period we call globalisation. However, not everyone and all ideas have equal mobility. Mobility in this phase of internationalisation is inherently tied to issues of power and access to resources.

6.1 Contexts

The field of study abroad is just one example of this hyper-mobile period. Millions of international students study abroad every year. The reasons they do so are myriad, but there is an increasing trend to study abroad to accumulate socio-cultural capital. As Bourdieu has shown, the accumulation of socio-cultural capital is dependent on initial access to resources in order to accumulate more. Not all students are capable of studying abroad owing many factors, just one of which is financial constraints.

Despite the USA being a comparatively wealthy nation, it lags when coming to sending students abroad. Many in the USA have realised the important benefits study abroad can bring and there is now a concerted push to rapidly increase the numbers of American students studying abroad. Additionally, America has, until recently, sent many students to other Western countries, but few to non-Western, and especially developing countries.

The professional field of study abroad has been increasingly caught up in a contradiction. On the one hand, the field aims to educate people about different cultures, and open students up to new ways of being, new attitudes towards the world. On the other hand, study abroad, like all of education, and many fields, has been increasingly pressured into neoliberalisation. Under this pressure, study abroad providers are increasingly not educational providers, but

service providers. Concomitantly, less emphasis seems to be placed on student learning, and more on customer satisfaction. In addition, many practices within the field would seem to indicate that study abroad is a means of practising soft power. American soft power is meant to convince one of the value of American standards, values, and beliefs. As such, there is an inherent tension between study abroad as a function of American soft power, and study abroad as educating about cultural difference.

There is a dearth of research into study abroad and that which exists suffers deficiencies in methodology, scope, and context. In particular, even though globalisation has foregrounded issues of identity, much study abroad research has not worked with 'identity' and has not done so according to the latest conceptualisations of this very difficult area. Furthermore, while some work has been done on (non-Western) international students in Western countries, very little has been performed on Westerners in non-Western contexts.

The questions I posited at the beginning of this thesis remain the same: to what extent do American students draw on discourses of identity to articulate their South African sojourn?; how do they position themselves and others in constructing their identities?; to what extent are they influenced by the local context in the construction of their identities?; and to what extent can their construction of identities be said to be influenced by normative practices in the field of study abroad?

6.2 Methodology

The social sciences has seen a turn to the central notion of 'identity'. From a post-structuralist point of view, identity is fragmented, can be multiple, and is fluid. People carry many possible identity options with them and may lay claim to these identities, deny these identities, challenge these identities, and help construct these identities.

This research departs from the tradition of sociolinguistics as established by Labov, Hymes, and Gumperz. It draws on several aligned theoretical points chiefly; performativity (Butler and Pennycook), critical discourse analysis (e.g. Fairclough), positioning theory (e.g. Bamberg 1997, 2004, Pavlenko 2001), and small stories (e.g. Bamberg and Georgakopoulou 2008, Barkhuizen 2008). It is argued that people contest and construct their identities by in the moment. Small stories and position-taking are integral to recovering this meaning-making process. They allow for a closer reading of the data, allowing the addition of comments and asides that may otherwise have been overlooked. While looking for overarching narrative stories (i.e. big stories) can still be fruitful, small stories enables identity work to be performed on shorter tracts of text, such as the surveys used in this thesis. However, a balance between the micro and the macro is always advisable.

A sample of 46 surveys comprised the data for this research. The survey is one issued by The Council on International Educational Exchange, an American not-for-profit organisation that provides programs around the world for American students wanting to study in a foreign country. The survey is structured to obtain customer feedback. The surveys span a period of three years at CIEE's study center in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

6.3 Findings and hypotheses

The students in this research drew heavily on discourses of identity to articulate their study abroad experience. Several identities were commonly proffered by respondents such as consumers, students, foreigners, and workers. The respondents also positioned others in their surveys; CIEE staff members and organisation, South Africans, and other international students. The local context was very important in the construction of their identities, as it was found that their period abroad had affected many of them deeply. However, in general they fail to critically reflect on how their cultural presuppositions may be effecting their experiences of the program and people they come into contact with. Additionally, support was

found for the idea that the field of study abroad, and in particular CIEE, as the study abroad provider, plays a role in shaping the construction of student identities.

6.3. Limitations

There are several limitations to this research. Firstly, it is confined to just one nationality (American) visiting at one institution (Stellenbosch University). Secondly, though the survey is an ideal example of the nature of the market-based relationship between CIEE and the student, it is recognised that the addition of non consumer-directed questions may well have produced different results. Ideally, a mixture between the survey and other narrative writing would have been used. Thirdly, several of the survey respondents filled out their surveys very hastily. Some barely responded at all. While this hasn't had a huge effect on my ability to look at a large number of students, it does somewhat reduce the total of 46 'respondents'. Finally, and connected to the previous point, in some of the surveys, the respondent did not expand on what they meant. Additional information could have contextualised the responses even more than they were.

6.4. Suggestions for further research

There remains a lack of identity based research on Westerners in non-Western countries. If the USA is to fulfil their dream of sending 1 million students abroad within 10 years, the rapid increase of students is likely to bring with it new problems and concerns. Timely research into this still growing field is necessary. In the particular case of Americans in South Africa, further research should look to performing similar analyses at other institutions of higher education to see whether the findings observed in Stellenbosch remain valid in other parts of the country. Another point of interest for further research would be to check whether students position themselves differently at intervals during the period from when they arrive to when they depart. Repositioning in this way may offer even more insights into the identity construction of students abroad.

Finally, and most importantly, research needs to be conducted into the tension between consumerism and learning. I have noted that students' ethnocentrism and consumerism interacts to prevent the attainment of certain understanding of intercultural. However, research must still ask how deeply does the 'instrumental attitude' of student-consumers affect the learning process and in what ways?

6.5 Recommendations to the field

Aside from recommendations for further research, it is to be advised that practitioners in the field start to listen to how their students talk about their sojourn abroad. If, as van der Berg (2007) has noted, students are not showing the intercultural and educational progress the field both promises and expects, practitioners should monitor how their students construct their identities to gain insight into what could be done to enhance the educational mission. Additionally, organisations and individuals in the field should consider how they position their own students in order to investigate their own complicity in the retardation of the developmental and educational process of study abroad students.

The field as a whole should also investigate the ramifications of the commodification of higher education, i.e. the neoliberalisation of the educational process. What we gain in the number of students, we may lose through the diminished quality of the time abroad.

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ADDENDUM A

SURVEY RESPONSES

Marilyn

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

No, but I think that the CIEE staff should strongly encourage a correspondence between past program participants and participants on the verge of departure.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The main weakness was that the CIEE orientation was mostly redundant information since I've travelled abroad in Central America, Europe and Asia before. The strengths were that it was conducted in a professional, engaging manner. Bradley really strived to get us to maximize our abroad experience to the fullest.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I personally really enjoy quirky festivals and activities. Tourist-y stuff is nice, but what about a weekend at a backpackers in Kayalitsha? Why not go to the Aquarium (hint hint)? Etc.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The quality of the IPSU classes was frankly appalling. Not only were lecturers consistently late, unprepared, unclear, sometimes in an unfit condition to teach (one lecturer had clearly had a couple of drinks), but I found that class standards were minimal. Attendance was not a priority, class content was a farce (in one class, the lecturer taught out of one short book the entire semester from which she took photos, exposition, interpretations) and the lecturers were clearly not engaged with teaching. In the Xhosa language class, we were shown repetitive videos of Xhosa life for nearly two months. I was disappointed with the IPSU classes overall, but here's the bright side: I felt like I got so much out of living in the dorms that the quality of academics didn't matter. At Metanoia, I was also exchanging books with other students or staying up into the early hours having discussions about nearly every topic in the world from philosophy to aquatic sea life to Afrikaaner identity. If I had been living in Academia/Concordia, isolated from other South Africans, I would have been miserable. As it was, living in Metanoia was the real education.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

I only took one university course and though the quality of instruction was much better than IPSU courses, I was surprised by how shallow the depth of discussion was. I kid you not; my junior high school English class held discussions that were more insightful than this seminar. Huge chunks of time

was spent discussing whether or not the novel being discussed should be liked, or in one instance, what a novel constituted. 'Twas frustrating, but I really enjoyed the reading so in the end, it was worth it even if class meetings were unnecessarily lengthy.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Encourage students to take mainstream classes, or have CIEE designed courses where academic standards actually exist. IPSU classes just don't cut it.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I liked the theme of transformation, I received unanimous rave reviews from multiple past program participants, I have an interest in issues like identity and human rights.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Not too shabby. Hard to address if one isn't involved in community outreach and even then, the theme of transformation is overshadowed by how sweet the pace of life is at Stellenbosch. Because Stellenbosch is a bit of a bubble, it is difficult to constantly engage with transformation unless one aims to. The group outings contributed nicely to the theme, but I would suggest a group community project which would be fun but instructional at the same time.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I loved teaching at a pre-primary school in Kayamandi. Although there were definite issues such as the size of classes, teaching in another language, the differing learning levels of various students, it was tons of fun and I got to design curriculum, something that I haven't been able to do since high school. I think that the Kayamandi project, however, still has a long way to go in terms of its scope and its efficacy.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Because it will be one of the best decisions you've ever made. Ever.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

There are three top highlights out of the many. One, living in Metanoia. You will learn so much and come away changed. You will make some of the closest friends you've ever made and have some of the most penetrating discussions about the most random topics. Two, the program design. Excellent, in my opinion from the group outings to the logistics. Three, Bradley Rink. He's really made this experience as fabulous as possible, providing both support as well as a sounding board for being abroad.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

I think you should make community involvement mandatory, to be honest. Since Stellenbosch is such a bubble, one must be forced to engage with something other than the white Cape Dutch facades that line the streets. It would be simple to compile a hulking list of outreach and volunteer organizations in and around the Stellenbosch area. And honestly, transformation is a theme that can't be dealt with from

a desk. In terms of 'integrated studies with South African students', I would agree--if the learning is unofficial. Why not assign mandatory books or articles and then hold discussions? I really liked the screening of 'My Big Fat Afrikaaner Wedding'. And why not have a group community project such as raising funds for HIV/AIDS outreach, which could be easily done at a res as large as Meta.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

Truthfully, I'm more than satisfied. I was burnt out after a semester working two jobs and taking a staggering course load. But being here gave me a new perspective and I feel as if I learned quite a bit about South African society in its current transitional stage.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Many people seem confused that I could simultaneously be Asian ethnically but have American citizenship at the same time. I received comments like, 'Soooo... are you half Asian and half American?' or 'You have Asiatic features. Are you Hawaiian?' or 'What's your cultural background? You look different from the other Americans. Are you Native American?' I think that the difficulty many South Africans have is that the media portrays one demographic of Americans, namely that of the white middle class. The vast majority of study abroad students also tend to be white middle class. In terms of attention, I was constantly bombarded with admirers. I would be stopped on the street or at the Neelsie or shopping or whatever on a weekly basis by someone who wanted to tell me that I was beautiful-- something that has never happened to me before on such a consistent basis (except in Italy) and that was before speaking, so it wasn't the fact that I was American. I didn't mind; it usually wasn't in a dodgy manner. The attention wasn't limited to a certain group, however. White, colored, black, lesbian, Zimbabwean, Namibian, Afrikaaner, old people, young people--they all seemed fascinated. On the flip side, I sometimes felt as if my looks were being exoticized or fetishized from an ethnocentric perspective. I had a couple uncomfortable encounters at Springbok and the attention did make me feel uncomfortable at times. But then again, it is flattering to have a police car pull over and have your university security guard buddies tell you that you're looking great and to have a nice day before pulling away. I also think that many might have thought that I was South African. I was constantly bombarded with Afrikaans. Some thought that I was colored because I tan so quickly. In terms of religion, there are churches in Stellies that lean towards the cultish side. Stellenbosch, because it is overwhelmingly Afrikaaner, also tends to be more conservative in terms of sexuality. On the bright side, the Lesbigan Society thrives.

Hugh

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

It was very strong. At times it was a bit long but this was due to sever jet lag.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

Not all that challenging, but I do feel like I learned something. The majority of my learning took place outside the classroom, however, and the lack of constant assignments enabled me to do this more easily.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I knew that my credits would transfer because my home university had approved this exchange program and one other in Africa.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Highly effective, I thought that the theme of tranformation was presented and grappled with in a variety of different ways.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I was able to teach dance at a local township and it was one of the most rewarding parts of my experiences in Stellenbosch.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

This is one of the most beautiful places I have ever been. The student culture is fun and lively, and there is so much to do and see. I can't find the words to describe how much this town has come to mean to me and I know that I am not the only one to feel this effect.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

-All of the group activities (hikes, weekend trips) -additional traveling around south africa – community service -meeting people fascinating people from SA and around the world and forming strong friendships with them and learning from each person. -learning about myself and becoming more comfortable with who I am and what I want out of life

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

This program and my experience in South Africa far exceeded my expectations. It was incredibly well run and I feel that I have had a truly transformational and life-changing experience. I really do not have negative things to say.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Race was definitely an issue that came up again and again throughout the stay and some people here are racist. This is an unfortunate but real consequence of the country's tumultuous history but I did feel that people were increasingly interested in discussing persisting racial tensions.

Elizabeth

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I would have liked to know where I was living before I left the states because it would have allowed me to pack the necessary items for living in the dorm whereas I had packed to live in the apartments.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

I enjoyed the visual representations, there were no weak points for me, the US International Orientation however was often unrelated and I would have liked to know that it was not necessary.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

None! They were great.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The Overview of South African History course was not at all enjoyable and I felt it to be a waste of time, however I loved my other classes and don't regret taking them at all.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

My English course was spectacular, I loved taking classes with regular students and wish that I was able to take more of them, but I had personally chosen not to.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

There was a significant difference in work level, but the papers were rewarding. Other than knowing about the level of work before we apply, and leave, I don't see any other needs of improvement.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I wanted to be in a smaller town with a more intimate setting and taking courses at the local University, CIEE Stellenbosch was a good fit.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

It was effective, but I would have liked to have more discussions throughout the semester as a group rather than the one big one at the end.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I loved working at Kayamandi, I would recommend it to all the future students.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I would recommend it for the intimate group and educational setting. I would also say that [the RD] is excellent and a wonderful resource to study abroad.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The group excursions, [the RD]'s resources and enthusiasm, living and working with the Stellenbosch students.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

It does a pretty good job for being such a young program.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

It met my expectations I met wonderful people and had an incredible experience in the dorms and in the classroom.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I loved the religious focus of the students here, since I am a religion major it gave me incredible insight. I had a hard time with the race aspect, seeing the division between white, black and colored was hard especially working in Kayamandi, but it was a great opportunity to talk about it with the students.

Leonardo

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The best part of the orientation was that we were made aware of the resources that were available to us, if necessary. However, we were encouraged to reach outside our comfort and see our community. The really was no negative aspects of the orientation.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

All activities were incredible, and I had an awesome time. The only thing I would enhance is the lack of true interaction with the people within the cultures of the activities. It would have been nice to do a little more connecting with local Africans.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I was sadly a little dissatisfied in the challenge of the international student program. The classes offered through the university for international students are rather simple and superficial. I found them somewhat underwhelming, wondering if I truly gained intellectually in the classroom, or if it was all experientially learning.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Perhaps providing some connection with the host institution professors regarding syllabi and expectations of the courses would be helpful. I found the expectations and workload very different from my home university, which is surely logical, but still hard to grasp.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I was impressed with the opportunities offered through Stellenbosch University, and received great praise from a fellow university student about his experience with CIEE. I was mostly unaware of the differences with CIEE and AIFS, or other international program umbrellas.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

The program was wonderful at allowing us to gradually discover ourselves. We were given opportunities that opened our eyes, and then allowed to discover more for ourselves.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

As part of my course of study I was involved in a community development program in a local impoverished community with native African people. I acted as the head basketball coach for a group of 17-20 year old youth, and it was a very eye opening experience, and a thrilling one as well.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Stellenbosch provides so much opportunity to see many parts of life. It is very comfortable in setting, yet provides many experiences to test your comfort zone, such as getting involved in the local townships. The college setting is wonderful, as I come from a big city. Cape Town is near by for the anxious types, and there is so much natural beauty around you for the transcendental types. All-in-all really hard to go wrong in Stellenbosch.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The sense of companionship I gained with the other program participants is something that I could and would not trade for anything. The program director really helped make the experience as well, always truly engaged in my life, and always providing a fantastic view into the lifestyle of a South African.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I found nothing but family in South Africa. Afrikaans, Xhosa, European, American, fathers, sons, friends, brothers sisters. I felt welcomed by all these people and am so thankful to have crossed their paths.

Julie

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

That Afrikaans is still such a strong component of the host university's language, resulting in it being difficult to take mainstream university courses

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

CIEE orientation was very relevant and not too long or short. Covered important and useful information. However, it was so thorough that the International Orientation given by Stellenbosch International Office was not very useful or necessary for CIEE students.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Living in a res with other South Africans was extremely beneficial. It would have been nice to do a few more cultural outings/ excursions. We did a lot at the beginning (which was great) and then seemed to not do too many during the middle or end of the trip. Would have been nice to have more excursions, even if they were just optional excursions.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

Not applicable

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

They were average, but I feel that an experience like this is more about what you learn and experience outside of the classroom.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

not applicable

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Would have been nice to have the option to take more classes with actual Stellenbosch students, but I know that is a conflict due to language barriers.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

Safety and location.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Very sufficiently

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

not applicable

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

[the Resident Director] as the program director (would not have been the same without him); the kindness of the South Africans; the diversity of the people and landscape of South Africa as a whole; if interested in the process of wine making, perfect place to come

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Living in Metanoia (a res) with other South Africans; [the Resident Director], program director; excursions

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

My experience with this program was very positive and extremely beneficial in my life.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

They took place every single day simply by walking down the street, sitting in a cafe or talking to people in res.

Marlon

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

While mentioned, I feel that more emphasis should be placed on the fact that international students are somewhat limited (by language, structure and convenience) to the ISOS courses. This is evidenced by the fact that most international students, from CIEE and other organisations, only take classes from this VERY limited selection. I thus feel that real effort should be put into encouraging participation in "normal" classes and, at the very list, the list and variety of ISOS classes should be VASTLY increased.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

[The Resident Director] is excellent in this, and every other, area. He anticipated most questions and proved a veritable treasure-trove of information on every issue. I feel that, in the January-June Semester, one arrives a bit long before classes start. Furthermore, participation in the "normal" INTL orientation, as well as [The Resident Director] 's CIEE-specific sessions, proved redundant, as all our questions/issues had already been dealt with by [The Resident Director].

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I feel that my experience at Stellenbosch would have been diametrically different had I lived in Academia instead of Metanoia. Indeed, the living situation in Academia (which, apparently, CIEE also uses for housing on occasion) would not have been at all equal, in terms of exposure to local culture, facilitating the development of friendships and relations with local students, to living in Metanoia. As a result of its geographical location in town, as well as its cost, Academia often feels more like a holding pen for international students than an actual residence hall. This was confirmed by all the other international students that I met, most of whom lived in Academia. They were not at all as much "in the thick of it" and mostly resorted to doing things with other international students. Why, as an American, would I travel to a South African university in order to live, in a guarded compound, with another, unknown, American? I am thus very happy that we were placed in Metanoia, as I would have been most unhappy with the programme otherwise. By living in Metanoia, the seven CIEE students were surrounded only by other South Africans and Namibians. This meant that we quickly got to know local students, their families and their lives. Surely this is a central tenet of any study abroad programme! Thus, I heartily recommend that CIEE only place students in Metanoia or other "normal" residence halls.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

N/A

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The quality is decent. As stated previously, the range of courses offered to international students is extremely restricted, thus limiting one's options. I found many courses to be excessively trivial, with work-loads that were simply too low. Furthermore, with courses offered only to international students, one is limiting one's exposure to new view-points, different cultures, etc... In other words, the real "meat and potatoes" of any study abroad programme. This strikes me as being, frankly, somewhat

asinine. In one of my political science classes, for example, which dealt with China and India's emergence as powerful forces in Africa, all the students were international, with about 60% coming from the United States. I thus got a very similar point-of-view as I would have received at my home institution. Why not have International Students take "normal" classes, where they would be confronted with new attitudes, expression-styles, opinions? Surely this would be far wiser. As a result of this, professors tended to "pitch", or present, their class in a more Americanised fashion. This is, once again, not what I went abroad for. If I wanted an American-style class, I could have stayed home. Let the entire affair, class, style and content be truly immersive.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

See above. Joint answer.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I wanted to attend an actual university, not have a more "self-study" or "CIEE-led" learning experience. Stellenbosch is a very interesting town, politically, linguistically, culturally. I did not want to attend CIEE's programme at UCT, as the setting is far less unusual and, thus, less interesting.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

The programme was successful in this regard, as much as it could be. Naturally, for such noble, and vague, goals to be acceded, students must willingly be curious about all that they see and experience. You can promote and encourage, but it's a decision and attitude that the student must ultimately, perhaps sadly, adopt of his or her own volition.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

N/A.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

It's an excellent opportunity to begin the difficult, challenging, setting that is South Africa. And this in cultural, political, linguistic, economic and other fashions. It's an excellent institution, located in a fascinating region the country. And, frankly, [the Resident Director] is simply superb.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The location, [the Resident Director], the people I met in Residence Hall.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

The studies could be more "intergrated with South African Students", as I have now stated ad nauseam (sorry...).

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

Living in a "real" residence hall was critical to getting the most out of the experience.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Every experience in South Africa is linked, if not entirely than rather intrinsically, with race. Every meal at a restaurant, every conversation with someone on the train, or bus, or residence hall. A specific example? The boer who told me in Afrikaans that "English is the language of the anti-Christ", and meant it.

Diane

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I would have liked to know that the Residence Hall housing option was with other South African Students and that Lusitania was with more international students.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The orientation was well done - effective and efficient.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

This classes were good, but I feel they were isolated and too similar to American classes.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

These were my favorite courses. The provided a lot of exchange of knowledge about things that I had never thought about - plus they highlighted issues that the American education system hardly does or in a different way like post-colonization, poverty, feminism, etc.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

It would be nice to know before going that many of the classes are taught in Afrikaans and the T-option courses are predominantly Afrikaans - so there are not as many classes that someone who does not speak Afrikaans can take successfully. By that I mean, of course you can take a t-option course and pass because all of the material and tests are in English, but a student will not get as much out of the class.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

As I stated previously, CIEE was the biggest help to prepare me and answer questions. They were much more helpful and thorough than others I contacted.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Honestly, I completely forgot about this theme as the program continued. I believed I have transformed though...

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

[Omitted]

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Stellenbosch is an ideal place for study abroad because it allows you to explore another part of South Africa not really known to Americans. It is one of the most beautiful places I have ever been (although Cape Point really is the most beautiful place I have ever been). It is hard not to fall in love with the beautiful landscape, the fairy-tale-esque parks, and the food. In my opinion, and those of others I have talked to in general, everyone prefers Stellenbosch to Cape Town because you just feel safer, more relaxed than I imagine Cape Town would be.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Living in Carpathia, having a Head Advisor that knows South Africa very well and is amazing, cultural activities such as Dance Performances and Robben Island

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I would have like the program to be more helpful in preparing spring break plans.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I think that women should be better informed about the prejudices they will face. I was not unaware of this before coming to South Africa, but I really did not realize the extent of it until I got here, but then again I guess it might be something that you have to experience.

Jodie

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

too long...by the last day, and the last hour, it was hard to pay attention any longer -- should be condensed

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

everything was great!! loved every second

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

the seminar was a good forum to talk about our experience as it occurred

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

IPSU courses were great, focused on the culture we were immersed in

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

main-stream class was challenging, but worth while. I think that students should all take at least one main stream class while at Stellenbosch

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

i had friends at the program before me who loved it

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

well, we effectively discussed South Africa's transformation politically, socially and culturally so I suppose we covered the bases

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

volunteering at the pre-primary school was worth while -- i suggest that all students look into it

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

absolutely!

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

small group great Head Advisor awesome excursions perfect location

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

it exceeded all of my hopes!

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

gender relationships are much different here then they are in the states which I think we were warned of, but maybe should be discussed in the orientation just to give students a heads up.

Morgan

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

Just the general environment, things we'd be doing, appropriate attire to bring. Felt as though everything was quite vague.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Burt was great about pointing out cultural differences right away that were key to our understanding of Stellenbosch and South Africa. We had a great idea of our environment and boundaries.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Carpathia is perfect for making South African friends. All of the activities were above and beyond anything we could have hoped for: Overberg was UNBELIEVABLE; the fashion show/wine festival/rugby match were all wonderful; the hike around Table Mountain was amazing. All were things we'd never have gotten to do without this program.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

The only entirely applicable was Burt's Seminar, which provided a great framework for our time abroad.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

They were good - perhaps a bit easy and few meeting times; but still very interesting, and helpful to understanding this country.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

The topics were on point, but the rigor of the courses was not very high... though it IS important to give students time to travel and explore, so not necessarily complaining.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

CIEE was the only major approved one in this area - but based on everything we've heard from other students on other programs, the excursions, intimacy, and overall experience that CIEE provides far surpasses anything else here.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Wonderful – Burt is great at drawing together our different experiences to tie in with this theme.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

Volunteering in Kayamundi was a great way to experience a very different side of Stellenbosch.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Because this has been a phenomenal experience - there are so many intricacies and details to be learned and experienced that many tourists would overlook. So many things here are challenging and thought-provoking, without pushing a student SO far out of their element that it becomes overwhelming.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Overberg, Hoerkiwaggo hike, Cape Point (of course) - as far as excursions go; overall, the living situation, and Burt's presence as our mentor.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

Making sure that the students who are admitted to attend the program are very goal-driven and passionate about their time and experience here.. perhaps a more rigorous application/essay situation. The size of this program is a HUGE strength, and I believe CIEE should seek to maintain this intimate style of program.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The program was perfect in helping me to achieve my goals abroad. I've learnt more than ever imaginable.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Every day, something stuck out. Whether it was witnessed or discussed in conversation with local friends, fellow CIEE participants, or Burt, some how everything around us related in a sense to those topics - many times starkly different from what we see at home.

Judi

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

None in particular.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

strengths: Burt, group bonding in Banghoek, Calvin, arriving before students did

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

n/a

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

some courses were informative and enriching, while others were literally just time fillers and useless.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

nice to get international perspectives throughout each course

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

small, removed from city, safer

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

very well done. i came here unaware of the vast diversity within the country, the ripples of apartheid and the serious nation issues that SA faces. i am confident in going home and being able to explain to everyone what a rich country SA really is.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

loved kayamandi, despite it's poor organization. i am so happy i chose to get involved with the community, i think this should be MANDATORY for everyone in some way or another.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

YES

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Burt, the size of the program, the overnight excursions, living with south africans in res

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

it was fascinating to take classes while traveling through the country and look at SA current events from a sociological perspective. fascinating country!

Viggo

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

[Omitted]

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

[Omitted]

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I didn't want to attend school in a city. So Stellenbosch's location was the major deciding factor.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

I can confidently say that I appreciated the theme of "transformation." I feel i was transformed into more

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

[Omitted]

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

It offers a great combination of big university feel with small town comfort.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The trip to overburgh!

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

Emma

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

No, there were not. The information provided to me was quite thorough.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The strengths of the orientation were that Burt was absolutely wonderful and did his best to make us feel as comfortable as possible in our new environment. Most of the information about the university itself and the town that it is situated in is also a valuable piece of the orientation. The weaknesses were that the orientation was a bit long, and it kept us from participating in Stellenbosch's new student orientation, which would have most likely been very important to our integration into South African student life.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

With CIEE, we saw a lot of interesting arts performances and historical sites, but I would be happy if it also organized some activities that brought us closer to the peoples of South Africa, for instance visiting an artisan's shop. However, this may be difficult and unrealistic.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

The instructor was very enthusiastic, and the course material was useful. However, some of the material was a bit dull, and a bit too much time was spent on it.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I found these courses limiting because they kept me from interacting and learning with other South African students. I also was annoyed that taking at least one was required, and they often conflicted with the mainstream courses.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

I loved these courses. One of the best things that I've done in South Africa is learn in a classroom with other South African students. The work was challenging and sometimes plentiful, but the experience was completely worth it. I only regret not taking more mainstream courses.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

The strengths were that many types of courses were offered, both in subject matter and in class composition. The weaknesses were that mainstream courses were not required of students, and the material for the CIEE seminar (the main things, not the interesting South African aspects that Burt brought in) was a bit dry (though useful).

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I thought that there would be less international students at Stellenbosch than at Cape Town (not necessarily correct, percentage-wise), one of my other options didn't have guaranteed hot showers, another one of my options had me living about as far away as Stellenbosch but commuting to Cape Town every day for classes, and this program was approved by my university in advance.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Burt has been WONDERFUL about addressing this theme. One of the first things that we did was write letters to ourselves about our thoughts and feelings coming into South Africa and our goals for our time in the country, which he gave back at our farewell dinner. He also wrote us letters himself about the ways in which we have grown, and he has reminded us that we are changing throughout our time with him. He has also spoken about and been available to speak about our feelings about reentering our home environments after having undergone such transformations, and he has made a point of making sure that we are prepared for the transformations that are still to come when we are home and assess what we have learned and how we have changed as a result of living and learning in South Africa.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I taught English at a child care center in Kayamandi, the closest township to Stellenbosch. It was very rewarding, though a little frustrating, as the program, which was organized by the United Nations Association of South Africa Stellenbosch Chapter was a bit disorganized and could have been more effective.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Stellenbosch offers a lot of insight into the separation of races that is still present in South Africa. It is also a relatively safe place to study, and the town is charming. Academically the courses are challenging, and Burt is there!

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The highlights were the Table Mountain hike, traveling to Boulder Beach and the Cape of Good Hope, Infecting the City, a performance art festival in Cape Town, and the bonding experiences that we had throughout the semester, at dinners and while participating in activities, as far as CIEE-specific highlights are concerned. At Stellenbosch, my time with the Improvisational Theater Society and other societies, as well as making friends who are from South Africa have been amazing experiences.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

Encouraging the students to take more classes with South African students, I think, is very important.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The program was wonderful, it gave me what I needed to meet all of my goals to some extent. I would have liked to participate in the new student orientation, in hind-sight, because I probably would have integrated better that way, but it was something that I did not clearly foresee at the time.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I had doors opened a lot for me by men because I am a woman. That's pretty much it!

Ingrid

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I feel that all of the information I received helped me prepare, the things that were left are the things that are best learned through initial experiences.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The CIEE orientation was helpful and allowed us to get to know each other. However, the university's international office's orientation was rather dubious and I feel that many of the sessions were unnecessary after the CIEE orientation.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

When students have the option of where to live strongly emphasize that they choose the option to live with native students.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I thought it was a little boring and corny. While the concepts are true it's better to just experience the emotions of study abroad. I think it would be more useful to teach about the history and politics of the location.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

They varied a lot. Some were amazing and others ended up lacking academic seriousness.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

I would try to incorporate your students into mainstream classes as best you can.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I wanted to come somewhere in Africa to compliment my major. I am really interested in South African politics, but when I received an email from Burt, I knew I had to come to Stellenbosch!

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

As far as personal transformation, that is mostly something that can't really be taught, so I wouldn't have wanted anything different.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I volunteered with Carpathia at Pebbles. I really liked it, but it started so late that I didn't really get to go that much. I wish I had done something more.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Absolutely!

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Burt! The size of the program was also wonderful. We had individualized help when needed and by not being apart of one massive program I think it helped us integrate into the culture a bit better.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

Maybe just a little more education about the political culture in SA.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I could not have imagined how amazing this experience was! I have learned so much about myself and feel like I understand so many aspects of SA. Some things I would have done differently (I wish I took a mainstream class), but as far as meeting people, learning the customs, seeing SA, and understanding my own personal capabilities, I could not have wished for anything more!

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I have heard many racially charged comments from different people that continually cage me off guard. I also began to notice how social groups are still often alined along race.

Audrey

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

While I definitely think some details about Stellenbosh were left out in the orientation process, such as that the dorm food is disgusting, I think that was appropriate in order to allow me to figure things out for myself once I arrived. I suppose with that example it would have been helpful to hear because it greatly affected my budgeting.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

We quickly got to know each other as a group and the location at the Botanical Gardens was great. I will say that I was so overwhelmed that I did not remember what was said really. The handbook was more helpful than the slides.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I loved living in Carpathia with South African students. I think living in the dorm should be encouraged over the apartments. At the beginning we were constantly busy with program activities. This was great because we got to see all that the area had to offer, however I feel like being away so much prevented me from getting to know people in my dorm because we missed a lot of the initial bonding activities. We should be included in some of the dorm orientation activities. Also, I said disagree for question 11 because we were unable to go on the rural overnight that we were promised in the program materials. While I understand that there were extenuating circumstances that trip was something that I was really looking forward to and was one of the selling points of the program.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

My language courses (Afrikaans and isiXhosa) could have been a bit more rigorous which would have resulted in a more rewarding grasp of the languages. My Economic Development class was probably my favorite of the semester. It was valuable to have an environment where I could learn about problems in South Africa with other foreign students that also had little background in the subject.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

In my university classes I learned just as much about South African culture as I did about the subject areas. They maintained high academic standards and kept me interested in the subjects. I was very satisfied with my mainstream courses.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

I am very glad I took a mix of mainstream courses and those for international students. While mainstream courses were not required I think the balance between the class types was a valuable addition to my academic program here and should be a requirement for the program. My language courses were the most disappointing because while I didn't expect to be fluent at the end of the semester I had hoped to learn more about culture through the lens of language.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I had planned to go to UCT but the courses offered did not align with those I need for my major at home. I was drawn to Stellenbosch because of its strong academics, medium size, and idyllic setting.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

I am sure I would have learned more specifically about this theme if I had taken the seminar, however it was evident all around me without having to attend lectures. Reading the local newspapers was a valuable part of this for me. I think more people would be apt to read them if the program provided them for the students.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I volunteered at a local creche and was very thankful that the program paid for my transport. Burt was extremely helpful in guiding me as I looked for places to volunteer. Unfortunately my busy course schedule prevented me from spending as much time there as I would have liked. I got a taste of what pre-primary education was like and had a ton of fun with the kids but was not there long enough to make strong connections.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

YES YES YES!!!! I loved Stellenbosch, both the city and the university! I felt safe and supported, yet encouraged to step out of my comfort zone. The academics were more rigorous than many other study abroad programs that I have heard about but that added to the strength of the program.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The trip to Cape Town for the public arts festival was the first thing that came to mind. It gave me a much better feel for the culture in the city and the theme of transformation. The Table Mountain hike was a big turning point for me in realizing my abilities and strength as an individual as well as the importance of group support. The greatest strength of the program is the guidance and encouragement from Burt to get involved and reflect on the experience.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

They should more strongly encourage students to take mainstream courses and complete service projects as a group early on. It would have been great if we had been pushed into the community right away and shown the many different opportunities first hand.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

My experience was very different than I had expected largely because my best friends here were all American. While I kind of regret that, I feel like the other program participants were sharing in the experience with me and we were all eager to learn and try new things together. I grew more personally as a result of my bonds with the other program participants that I did with any others. That being said I was still able to learn immense amounts about the country that changed my perspective on daily life.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

There were quite a few instances where I overheard racist comments and did not know how to react. I was never sure if it was my place to say something or whether I should pay more attention to the culture behind the comments and the reactions of others.

Bette

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I would have appreciated knowing it's such a small group and that there are not any program activities that take you out of Stellenbosch/Cape Town. I was surprised when I found out we didn't do any traveling outside of that area.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

I think Burt did a great job being relational and let us have discussion about everything.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Besides our Table Mountain hike we did not get an overnight or weekend excursion. I was really looking forward to seeing more of the country and spending time as a group. I was under the impression that we would go to some sort of farm or beach house. I was also under the impression that we were going to do a group volunteer activity which never happened. This was a very big disappointment. Housing- I really wish I would have known that in Lusitania you do not meet South Africans. There are very few South Africans who live in the building and they have to be getting their Masters or PhD to live there which means they are in a totally different season of life. I definitely would have changed where I lived had I known this.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I really enjoyed the seminar. I think there was too much homework considering it is a one credit course.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

[Omitted]

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Again, I wish I would have been challenged to take main stream classes. I knew it was an option, but I wish someone would have explained what a cultural opportunity it would be. When first arriving there is so much going on and I didn't make the wisest decisions. Meeting South Africans was very hard for me to do and I should have taken any opportunity that was available.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I saw that there would be more support from someone on campus, and it appeared to me like there would be more volunteer opportunities.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

I did not know this was a theme, but I suppose through the seminar we learned a about transformation in South Africa.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I got involved with a reading program in Kayamundi which was great, but very short. And I started working with Pebble's doing administrative stuff but got sick.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

It is absolutely beautiful and South Africa is such a rich country with so much potential. Stellenbosch is a very safe town.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Table Mountain- we got to spend two days together as a group hiking 13 miles! Camping together was wonderful as well. I also really enjoyed Robben Island and the movie Skin.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

"through integrated studies with South African students" We were given a blue IPSU book that was classes for international students. The option of taking main stream courses was available, but I didn't personally feel like I knew much about it. I absolutely would change the classes I took had I been more aware. There were no South African students in any of my classes.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I thought there would be more opportunities to get involved with South Africans. I did not know what service learning meant going, so I think I was more under the impression that is how CIEE would be, but I was hoping for more of a group volunteer program. I definitely learned a ton from this experience, but it was not what I was expecting or hoping. I really thought we would get more into the culture.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I was shocked at how open people were to talking about race and everyday was an experience. Just hearing someone call someone black or coloured was something I'm not used to.

Katharine

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

n/a

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

it was very thorough and informative

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

important to explain the differences between housing options. really enjoyed the 2 day table mountain hike, but we didn't do the overnight weekend that was supposed to be a part of our program and we paid for, which was disappointing.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

Seminar on Living and Learning was interesting, but I would have appreciated more emphasis on South African culture

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

good overall, light to moderate workload

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

Interesting, difficult at times with Afrikaans usage, even though it was supposed to be taught in English, but very do-able.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

academically strong, an environment where you get out what you put in.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

Setting in Stellenbosch, excellent reviews of Head Advisor Burt

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

successful, looked at cultural transformation and personal transformation

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

Involved in the Pebbles project, which was wonderful, but it was extremely difficult without a background in Afrikaans so I would be hesitant to recommend it to future students.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Absolutely. I love it here.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

the Table mountain excursion

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

Didn't participate in campus-wide community service programs

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

Angelina

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I think that better photos and explanations of Stellenbosch are necessary - most students seem to have a skewed impression of where they are headed.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

[Omitted]

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Students should definitely all be housed with locals - imperative to the immersion within cultural understanding. More effort should be made to organize activities which students find both enjoyable and informative about the culture, etc.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

Fine. Frustrating at moments, otherwise challenging and interesting to see the varied perspective – esp since many were european.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

Challenging and interesting. enjoyed classes with locals.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Certain courses are much less informative and interesting than students would like. More interaction with professors to understand the course qualities is important

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

Interest in cape town/western cape and south african culture - without wanting the large city atmosphere

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Not very good. Few things actually directed to such a theme past the orientation. Reflection and discussion should be important, not necessary in the "ciee seminar" but as a group living here and with south african students. When questions were posed, both John and Burt were lovely with responses, but their input when unsolicited may have been beneficial to those not outwardly challenging their experience with questions.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

[Omitted]

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Absolutely. I love it here.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Hoerikkwaggo Trail, definitely.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

As an experience, wonderful. But as a program focusing on transformation and Afrikaner/coloured identity, i really believe the approaches need to be reevaluated to better engage and challenge students.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

It is what you make of it – Burt and John work their hardest to provide opportunities and support for students.. though sometimes students fall in between the cracks as apathetic and not pushed to do soemthing more and engage with their experience.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Too many to recount.

Vivien

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

We learned a lot about culture which was great but I would have liked to learn more about South Africa. A brief background on history, politics, etc. would have been beneficial and a great way to start the program.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I think students in the future should live in the residence halls rather than the international flats. Living in Lusitania limited my interaction with South African students and lessened my cultural immersion. Excursions were great - a bit disappointed that we didn't have a weekend away.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

Enjoyed the CIEE seminar course... it was a great way to spend time with Burt and the rest of the students on the program. The class got me thinking about my experiences on a higher level and forced me to question some of my own thoughts, values, and ideas. I did not find the out of class work as beneficial as the in class work.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

Loved my Afrikaans and isiXhosa courses- not as academically challenging as my home courses but as a result I enjoyed going to class and believe I did learn a significant amount. The HIV/AIDS course was not as great as I thought it would be or think it could have been - needs more guest speakers, information on how the HIV epidemic affects South Africa.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

My classes were not too academically challenging nor did they require much time so I was able to really go out and experience South Africa. I thought this was a strength because I did not come to Stellenbosch to study, but rather learn and experience the culture first hand by getting out and interacting with people.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I looked at both UCT and Stellenbosch - chose Stellenbosch because the courses available seemed more geared towards learning about South African culture which is what I was interested in.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

very effective.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I worked at Pebbles Project - while I enjoyed it immensely and found it rewarding, I would not recommend future students to work there. My lack of ability to speak Afrikaans significantly hindered my ability to truly help the students and teachers at the Pebbles Project after-school program. Many times I just felt in the way and wished I had done other service where I could really be of use.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

ABSOLUTELY. I could not be happier with my experience in Stellenbosch.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Small group (11 students) – Burt was able to really cater to all of our needs and it was nice to be in a small group where I knew everyone, hiking Table Mountain, concert at Kirstenbosch, Stellenbosch was a comforting place to explore South Africa from (not as hectic as CT)

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

would have liked to do a community service project as a group.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The program went above and beyond my expectations. Few changes - don't make Moyo the farewell dinner because it was really hard to actually talk to people (a more intimate setting would have been appreciated), put more emphasis on making relationships with South Africans, have the CIEE seminar at TasteBud (easier to have discussions... plus good coffee)

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

Jack

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

The cost of food, and travel were grossly underestimated by CIEE and my study abroad program.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

It showed us how to survive on campus, but as far as to travel around South Africa it was limited

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Housing was fine, but the food in housing was not very good at all. There were very few options, and the options given were not even satisfactory. Maybe once a week, we would be able to eat the cafeteria food provided to us.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

The IPSU courses for the international students were interesting, some where great where others were almost a waste of time. But most of the IPSU courses if not all were all international students.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

Most of the IPSU courses were other international students and not South Africa students, and they were surprisingly not interested in academics while abroad. Most of the other students specifically the European students only had to pass the course to get credit, and thus created an apathetic mood in class.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

The national students were interesting to talk to, and I got a very different view of South Africa.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

The strengths were that lecturers and professors were available for access. The weakness was that most of the classes were simply evaluated on tests and nothing else. So there was no real incentive to class.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

The resident director – Burt, had a great reputation for running a great program in Stellenbosch, versus UCT.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

The transformation over the semester was greatly administered and followed up by Burt

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I was involved with too many community-based learning projects. I continued Vanderbilt's commitment to the community of Manenberg by teaching seventh grade at Manenberg Primary, helped set up a swap-shop and environmental education program at the Legacy Center in Kayamandi a township outside of Stellenbosch.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I would highly recommend Stellenbosch University as a study abroad destination for future students because it a great transition from the developed world to the developing world. With great community opportunities so close, and a insight into a different culture in South Africa, the Afrikaans culture, Stellenbosch provides a different and unique opportunity to study abroad in South Africa.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The highlights of the CIEE program were the number of outings we went on as a group, and the cultural experience that the institution provided. I would recommend however, a much more abrupt approach to cultural immersion by spending a night in a township and experience another side of South Africa first hand.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

Stellenbosch University is a very very different aspect of South Africa, because the university is majority white, in a very white area of South Africa. Because of this it has a different feel compared to UCT as I have studied on both campuses. Stellenbosch is also very sports oriented a critical part of South African culture, however; students who do not venture outside the town of Stellenbosch can have a very limited view of South Africa and the transformation that is taking place throughout the country.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I believe I tried to make the most of my time while abroad getting involved on campus as much as possible. However I wish i had the opportunity to either find a job outside campus, or some sort of internship to enhance my professional skills while abroad. I do not believe the CIEE program readily allow for a internship while studying abroad, as there seemed to be little connections and/or agencies to pair students with independent studies or internships

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Race is an everyday struggle within the Rainbow nation. But at the same time it hard to "blend" in as a South African. Regardless I experienced some sort exclusion specifically studying in Stellenbosch, because it was predominately white and I didn't speak Afrikaans. There were many social settings where it was more than just awkward and I felt that I didn't belong specially in particular residences on

campus. There was a sense of white South African pride on campus, particularly when Eugene Terblanche was assassinated. But regardless it was interesting to hear a different side of South Africa as I would have never experienced it if I didn't study at Stellenbosch.

Grace

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

[Omitted]

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

[Omitted]

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

cost

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

[Omitted]

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

[Omitted]

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

[Omitted]

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

[Omitted]

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Stellenbosch is a very conservative town. I've encountered racism and ignorance towards the LGBTQ community frequently.

Julia

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I should have been told about the separate international student classes.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

It helped me get a basic understanding of the small cultural differences between South African and American culture. But it did not prepare me for dealing with the general unfriendliness on campus.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I understand why you have us living in a dorm, but the food situation is unacceptable. We should have more say in how that money is used. I would have liked to put it towards a refrigerator or eating out. Some of the activities were cancelled. The farm stay was pretty boring.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

The course never ran. I was disappointed and annoyed. There should have been a way to figure it out.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The IPSU courses were generally poorly run.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Encourage students more to take mainstream courses. And discourage taking a language - it was pointless.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

Smaller town. Less crime. Less international students.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

it didn't, really.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

they were very rewarding. i would have been unhappy without it

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

i might not.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

[Omitted]

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

i expected to be more comfortable as an international student here. we should have been warned prior to the application that it was an unfriendly campus

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

though i knew they were fairly racist here, it still REALLY bothered me

Sandra

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

The conservative nature of the institution and the living situation were not accurately described.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

[Omitted]

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Students should be given choices regarding their housing situations. Some will prefer apartment style housing and some will prefer dormitories. Also the program should make sure that foreign students are placed in accepting and positive areas of the dorms.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

The classes were terrible and a complete waste of time. Neither the students nor the professors cared about the courses. I learned almost nothing in them. They were unbearably boring and useless. They were simply frustrating due to the level of apathy and ignorance of the student body and teaching staff.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

See above.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Do not recommend international classes nor language classes. The program was extremely inferior to that of any American institution.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

It had been recommended by my university.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

[Omitted]

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

Useless. I was made aware every session that I was in the way and not needed.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I would never recommend it.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The CIEE staff was fabulous, even if the university and housing was terrible.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Stellenbosch is the most racist, homophobic, sexist place I have ever been to.

Tom

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

It was a bit dry and difficult to get through while coping with jet-lag.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Personally, I enjoyed the residence in which I stayed, but I do know it was not many people's first choice--take into account what the student actually wants.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The standard and quality seemed to vary greatly within the international student classes.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

There was a solid idea of where the course was headed and it seemed to accomplish all of its goals.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Greater integration into the mainstream classes--less reliance on the international student classes to fill up requirements/credit hours.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I liked the size of the university and town.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

The idea of transformation cannot go unnoticed here, and there were definite activities which highlighted this, but it was never really flushed out.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

My engagement fell through.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

It's beautiful, friendly and I never felt unsafe.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The very first overnight at Cape Point.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

The idea seemed to fall by the wayside. To be honest, I had forgotten about this theme.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I came here with no preconceived ideas or expectations. I came ready to meet people from another culture. I feel because of my own attitude, I was able to get what I wanted out of this experience.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Through various conversations here, I have heard opinions, particularly about race, which quite disturb me. However, none of this was ever directed towards me.

Robert

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

informational but long and and somewhat boring

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I do not think we should be placed in the on campus res's unless we have requested it. I would have rather been in the apartments with the other international students.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I think there should have been more options for classes

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I am a human service major and it seemed as though it would be a different kind of experience than any other place. One that I would take more out of.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

[Omitted]

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I thoroughly enjoyed my work with the Pebbles project, it was one of the highlights of this trip.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

[Omitted]

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

working with the children involved with pebbles project. being able to choose what i wanted to do over the break/the break itself.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The experience was not at all what I had expected, but I grew from it in one way or another.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

AI

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I think the accessibility by train was a little deceiving. I thought it would be much easier to get into Cape Town from Stellenbosch, but it was much more difficult and if I wanted to stay past 5 or so, then it was recommended to get a hostel, which I was unaware about prior to departure.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

There was a lot of information that helped me know Stellenbosch and the area. I would say the only weakness would be that it was a bit repetitive.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I personally loved being in Carpathia, but I know a lot of others did not feel the same. My only complaint with it would be the food especially because it was limited and was difficult with certain dietary restrictions. Perhaps there could be some money set aside to purchase outside food, assuming the students (if they are living in Carpathia) don't want to eat at Fedics. I liked all the excursions, but I wish that everyone went on all of them because it would have helped to build a stronger group, although it is difficult to force people into participation.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I feel relatively negative about the courses particularly the international courses. I felt like I wasn't challenged at all and that most of the professors themselves seemed to not care about being there. It's difficult to want to put in any effort when you're able to see the professors putting in minimal effort.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

The one regular class I took was my favorite. There was a lot of discussion and participation and I felt motivated to do the work, participate, and learn.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

I really think that the international courses need to be improved drastically. It's certainly difficult to expect international students who are abroad to put in a lot of effort, but for those who do want to learn, the courses, mainly due to the professors' lack of motivation, are not challenging.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I thought it would be nice to be in a suburb as opposed to a city.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

[Omitted]

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I enjoyed mine, but felt that there were other things I could better contribute to. I think because the community-based learning projects were a forced aspect of the program itself, many people weren't passionate about what they did.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I think that Stellenbosch was very much outside my comfort level. The community itself is much more conservative than places I'm accustomed to or places I have ever lived. I think that that made this especially difficult for me. However, I think by being outside my comfort zone, I was able to learn a lot more about myself and a lot more about people who I'm not ordinarily around. I would tell others, especially others who may be queer, that it is very difficult, but for that reason it made it a better learning experience, which I think is an important aspect of study abroad. For those who don't necessarily want to be in a conservative community, it certainly is difficult, but everyone can find their niche there.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Burt and John made the program great. I don't think I would have been nearly as satisfied had they not been there.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

I wish we were able to see more of Ida's Valley or other Coloured communities, since Burt mentioned that Stellenbosch is primarily a Coloured community. This certainly wasn't visible when looking at the university though.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I dealt a lot with opposition to my gender and sexual orientation. Many people didn't understand the idea of genderqueer or the fact that a female could be gay. I was confronted a lot by people asking me what my gender was, people staring at me, and just an overall lack of understanding how a female could be gay, by having men hit on me in an effort to "change" me. Stellenbosch was very difficult in that regard, but at the same time it challenged me and made me learn more about myself and about others. In terms of race, I found there to be a significant amount of blatant, in-your-face racism, which was extremely powerful for me to see. I think that a lot of the white community in Stellenbosch is still

really conservative with their beliefs. I saw fights emerge as a result of inter-racial couples and such. It was very difficult, but as I mentioned, very powerful and necessary for me to see.

Charlize

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I felt as informed as one probably can be from the other side of the world.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Being able to access a computer at the orientation times was difficult personally for me

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I doubt Burt and John could have done a better job. They really helped make the experience incredible.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I would suggest really encouraging the students to take the Stellenbosch courses that are offered in English. I felt the IPSU professors lacked the enthusiasm that the Stellenbosch teachers possessed. It was also a learning experience in itself being in a class with South African students.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The experience made learning in the classroom even better when being able to compare the U.S and South Africa in all areas of study.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

The university courses were the best ones I had during my semester.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Finding IPSU teachers who care more.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I wanted a more meaningful experience with my semester abroad. I wanted to immerse myself in a colorful culture and have the opportunity to part take in some kind of service work, getting involved in the community.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

It was quite an interesting experience being in a country undergoing such transition. In keeping with the theme I was very conscious of what the people I encountered were saying about their country, their experiences, and culture.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

Being at Pebbles was remarkable. I can't even do the experience justice by trying to explain how amazing it was to work with my class on uBuntu wine farm. My class was an amazing bunch of kids who taught me so much. I enjoyed going there every week and spending time with them. The kids at uBuntu helped make my experience abroad so great. I loved every one of them and already miss them so much.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I already have had a few people from [my home university] email me about the program and I have told them that Stellenbosch offered me a way to do more than just study abroad. I believe that I wouldn't have been able to really immerse myself within a culture the same way anywhere else or really get involved with the community.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

- South Africa itself -The American and mostly South African friends I made -The English courses through the University I got to take - uBuntu Wine Farm and Pebbles Project - Every outing we went on -Making it to the top of Table Mountain -Indulging in olives! –Burt & Joe

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

Really just push for the Stellenbosch courses over IPSU

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I think that as difficult as it may be and bothersome at times taking a language for me personally helped me to maximize my experience and learn about a new culture.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

You have to take everything with a pinch of salt. Try to really open your eyes up to the country you're living in and the cultures within it. And I think what prepared me most was the books I read before coming, fiction and non fiction.

Sylvester

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

When I checked the study abroad locations through [my university], the only university that came up for South Africa was Stellenbosch University, not the University of Cape Town. I was looking to study music, particularly jazz music. It wasn't made clear that the University of Cape Town was an option and that it had a much stronger jazz program than Stellenbosch, which is primarily classical. That being said, I had a great time in Stellenbosch and still found lots of musical opportunities, but I would have considered University of Cape Town if I had known it was an option.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

I can't think of any weaknesses. There were a lot of strengths. It was very informative and at the same time, very loose and casual, a great atmosphere for us to meet other students in the program and the two program directors. We sat down for a nice meal.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Don't allow a residence to make international students move out for the mid-semester break. That was the only really frustrating thing. I feel this is something the international office should fight for.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

There was a lot of variety in the international courses I took, ranging from South African history to Afrikaans to Xhosa to wine tasting. Most of the courses weren't too difficult, but were unique, interesting and focused on aspects unique to South Africa.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

The few I took at the conservatory were very conservatively taught (naturally!), which was a disappointment. A musicology course I took for example involved lectures in which the professor for large stretches would read from the textbook while all the students followed along. The professor was the head of the Conservatory, so he's the one driving the program. All the courses and the vast majority of ensembles were classically oriented. It was like the entire program had tunnel vision. I found that the music classes were not nearly as progressive or eclectic as they were at [my university] in the music industry program.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

CIEE did a good job offering a mix of international (IPSU) classes and mainstream classes, which created a lot of options. The two directors did a great job working with me to work out my schedule. I felt the quality of classes were not quite up to standard with most I've taken at [my university], but they were still fine and I learned a lot.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I wasn't aware that other programs in South Africa were available to me. Nonetheless, Stellenbosch was very appealing to me. It had a music program, so enabled me to meet graduation requirements and it looked really exciting in a beautiful location just outside of Cape Town in wine country.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

It didn't really address the theme. I learned a lot about South Africa through the excursions and through my South African history course, but other than the orientation, which did include a presentation on the topic, the program didn't touch too much upon the topic.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

Unfortunately, I didn't get too involved on this front. I was a member of Habitat for Humanity. I was all set to help them build a garden, which took place over the course of 6 Saturdays. I couldn't help out all six Saturdays, only five, but when I wrote the director of the project, he said you could only participate if you made all six events as it was for a certificate. I don't like to make excuses as I know I should have been more proactive, more involved on this front, despite this missed opportunity. I think I should have put myself in a better position that would have forced me to get involved in community service such as a few of the other programs, which were mandatory as opposed to Habitat for Humanity which is optional.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

It's beautiful and there's so much to do. The weather is almost always gorgeous, especially during the summer months. There are lots of vineyards, mountains, beaches, and a major city close by. You're almost never at a loss for things to do. English is the primary language spoken, so there isn't a language issue.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The excursions. Burt and John. The farewell dinner. All of the above were exceptional.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

I don't put too much stock in the above goals. The program didn't focus on transformation in South Africa, but they gave us a diverse look at present-day South Africa through excursions, including to the Bo-Kaap area of Cape Town and a native Khoisan reservation. I felt the program didn't specifically fulfill the above goals, but nonetheless, I feel completely satisfied with my experience in South Africa and feel I learned a lot. Maybe the mission statement should be tweaked a bit to actually match the contents of the program.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I came to South Africa expecting a stimulating, action-packed adventure, an enlightening experience and plenty of opportunities to further myself as a musician. I leave feeling fully satisfied I have fulfilled these expectations. I have done so much cool stuff, including all the CIEE excursions, hikes (especially the moonlight hike of Lion's Head), the penguin beach, wine tasting etc. etc. I feel I have learned an enormous amount about South Africa through my history course and especially through direct experience. Despite the classical nature of Stellenbosch University I played in their Big Band, took lessons with a jazz piano teacher, and went to a number of jazz jams around Stellenbosch, all of which helped me pick up a new style of jazz playing, cape jazz.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I found many of the white South students in Stellenbosch held racist attitudes. Nobody was belligerent or upfront about it, but I found when you really got to know many of the white students, you found they held negative attitudes towards non-white people. I met a number of students who told me straight up that they "hate black people". Despite the notion of a "new" South Africa, the races are still very much separate, evident in the townships which are all black and a beautiful town such as Stellenbosch which is predominantly white. This isn't too surprising given South Africa's history and particularly Stellenbosch's history as the "cradle" of apartheid as a stronghold of the Afrikaner community. Still, I was surprised how much racism there still was (albeit under the surface) despite 17 years since the end of apartheid.

Denzel

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I feel that Stellenbosch should be hyped up more than it really is. My top two choices were Cape Town and Stellenbosch and I chose Stellenbosch because I wanted to live with other South Africans, getting that cultural experience. Cape Town is only a 40 minute drive, short train ride, and Stellenbosch offers just about everything that Cape Town offers, plus more. There is a vibrant night life and it is definitely a college town. Everyone is friendly and it is safe. However, CIEE was extremely helpful with information regarding all of the programs offered.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Orientation did everything necessary to prepare me for my stay here in Stellenbosch. Burt and John were extremely helpful and answered all of our questions, and were always up beat. It was a great introduction to South Africa and I would not change a thing!

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I cannot think of any suggestions for improvement. The option to live with South Africans or other international students was given, the housing services were superb, and the activities and excursions were unreal. CIEE enhanced my experience with the ease of all of these services.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The quality of courses were challenging, yet extremely stimulating. I was able to learn a vast amount in the short time that I was here, yet, still able to do well while traveling the country.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

I took one course through the university attended by nationals and it was my favorite course. It was easy to get into and the professor was one of the best I have ever had. It was one of my more challenging courses but the workload was slightly above average yet it was worth it.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Academically, there are a plethora of classes to choose from and all of the courses I took were extremely interesting. I took political science, business (finance and economics), and liberal arts courses here; there is a lot of freedom to enroll in any course you want.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I choose CIEE because I wanted to live with South Africans. I also wanted to live in the winelands and I heard the rugby at Stellenbosch was top tier. I had the opportunity to play here which is also a factor I weighed in choosing. I also heard that the gym was unbelievable so with all of these plus the fact that it was a short drive from Cape Town made me choose Stellenbosch. There was also the fact that my counselor spoke highly of Burt and my buddy visited Stellenbosch and loved it. I also liked the idea of a college town.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

During orientation, transformation was talked about and if we had any issues, we could seek out Burt or John. I believe that everyone had a smooth transition and CIEE took the necessary precautions to warn us what could happen.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

My mate and I were able to take part in the Pebbles Project as well as Habitat for Humanity. Pebbles was an extremely rewarding experience as we got to play sport with 20 or so children after school. To see the smiles on the faces of all of the kids and the friendships that were strengthened on the futbol/cricket field just made us smile. It was certainly one of the highlights of the experience here in South Africa.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

-Friendly -College town feel to it -close to Cape Town -In the Winelands -Vibrant night life -Not expensive -Beautiful -Safe

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The on-site staff made the program enjoyable. Highlights include the excursions/CIEE organised events, traveling the country with guidance from Burt/ John, living in the winelands, rugby matches, surrounded by mountains - beautiful, great food, friendly people, indulging myself in the different cultures.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

None

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I certainly believe that I was able to gain the maximum benefit from my study abroad experience. I was able to visit Kayamundi with a few of my classes and partake in some service opportunities. South Africa certainly surpassed my expectations with things it has to offer. CIEE was able to give me the guiding light and open mind to be creative and take advantage of all that is offered here. I was talking with my mate and we mentioned how CIEE really was one of the smartest decisions we made, besides coming to Stellenbosch, because of some of the horror stories we have heard with non-CIEE students. And you would be surprised how many we have heard...

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

The Apartheid era was not to long ago and every now and then you would see a glimpse of tentions between race. People are regared as White, Black, or Coloured and the three main cultures that I saw were Afrikaans, Xhosa, and English South Africans. I did not have any negative experiences, but rather found out that South Africans are quite friendly. I was invited to braais, offered a lift to various places, was given a lift one night by somone I did not know at all except for the fact that we lived in the same res, and was always invited to come join in whatever was going on.

Kiera

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

More specific information should have been given about the residences at the host institution so that I could have made a more informed decision when choosing housing. It would have been useful to know previous students' opinions of/experiences in housing.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Promoted bonding within group and helped me to get to know the staff members and fellow students better. Too much information in one day, the orientation should have been broken up between two days.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Specifics about housing should be given ahead of time (i.e. how meals work, notice about weekly house meetings, proximity to other buildings on campus).

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

The seminar was informative and enjoyable. Burt is an excellent facilitator and I feel the information covered was useful and meaningful to my experiences in South Africa.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The classes taught be a great deal about the country I was studying in, material covered was applicable to my experiences. Service-learning courses should be promoted more. The service module at Stellenbosch was the most valuable course I have taken in my college career.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

N/A

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Academics was extremely tied to my cultural experiences in South Africa. It would be useful to hear former students' evaluations of the courses, although Burt was extremely helpful in providing information about the courses and lecturers.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I wanted to continue my studies of international development and engage with the community.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Burt helped to keep me mindful of my personal growth and progress throughout the semester and I certainly felt transformed by my experiences in Stellenbosch/local area so I would say the program was extremely effective.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

The service module was a life-changing experience. I grew as a student, as a teacher, as a development worker, and as human being. It provided invaluable insight into the lives of community members and helped me to become involved with the community in a meaningful and mutually-beneficial way. Every student, if given the opportunity, should take this course.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Absolutely.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Fellow CIEE students, Burt, the service module, cultural excursions.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

It would be helpful if CIEE more clearly outlined what some of those community-based learning opportunities might be (i.e. The service module. I was unaware of this course option until my CIEE advisor told me about it.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The program helped me to fulfill many, if not most, of my expectations. It would have been nice if they had facilitated more opportunities for us to meet South African students.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

As a female I was forced to take many more precautions than I do at my home institutions, for security reasons. The university provides an escort service that I used many times to get home after dark. The university/CIEE did a good job at making me aware of what security services were available to me.

George

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Very Informative and good introduction methods. Great location.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

The IPSU courses were excellent on the whole with a good amount of material to study and clear, comprehensive evaluation. Mainstream course I took was also good with a little less work.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

Same as above.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

The one I took had good teaching and I learned a number of interesting new concepts. The workload was a lot easier than I am used at my home university and from the international student courses offered at Stellenbosch.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

The IPSU courses are strong on the whole although one of the courses I took was not structured or taught very well (Transitional Justice). The Introduction to SA history course I also sat in on but did not take at the beginning of the semester was poorly taught by the professor. Advising on these courses by the CIEE coordinators was excellent and turned out to be spot on for all my courses.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

To immerse myself in South African culture by living with South Africans in a shared residence. I was also interested in the courses offered.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Very effective. I got a great idea through the classes I took and the teaching of both coordinators about the way SA has grown.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

The Pebbles Project was a great experience and most definitely worthwhile. I really enjoyed spending time with the kids despite the language differences and the coordinator was exceptionally nice. Fully recommend it.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

An amazing place to learn about the different cultures of SA, because there are a lot. The coordinators Burt and John were one of a kind and made the experience excellent. Academics are quite similar to the rigors of back in the States.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Burt and John as coordinators. The cultural activities. The freedom to take part in all sorts of extracurricular activities from rugby to wine tasting. The opportunity to travel in one of the most amazing countries in the world.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The experience exceeded my expectations in terms of the people I have met and the experiences that I have had during my stay.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Race is still understandably a big issue in South Africa and those studying here will quickly become aware of ever present rifts even during transformation. In terms of gender SA, and Africa generally, is quite paternalistic and women's rights are still up and coming in many local communities. Not really in the immediate Stellenbosch area which is developed in this aspect.

Meryl

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

Nope. I was totally prepared - for as far as an organization can prepare you.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

That I could pick up everything I needed to in one day with John and Burt... it was quite helpful

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I cannot think of any suggestions for improvement. The option to live with South Africans or other international students was given, the housing services were superb, and the activities and excursions were unreal. CIEE enhanced my experience with the ease of all of these services.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

Great course. Burt taught us a lot about cultural immersion I am very happy I got into the class

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

they were more difficult than I was expecting, but nothing too bad

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

N/A

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

prepare students better for the last two weeks (more of a warning that finals week will be a lot of work)

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

It was offered by my school.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

well done

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

there were a lot of opportunities, pebbles project was absolutely amazing

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

its paradise. best place i've ever been to. highly recommend it over cape town. its safe, easy to walk around in, best experience of my life

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The Khoi-San retreat was awesome!

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

N/A

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

Exceeded my expectations

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I learned a lot about all of these here

Helena

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I am glad that I chose to go to Stellenbosch through CIEE. I am also glad with my choice of residence, I just wish I had known a little bit more about each of the options.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

I think that the on-site orientation was particularly useful, and helped ease the group into being in South Africa.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Give better descriptions of housing.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I enjoyed the CIEE seminar. I thought that it was useful to be able to talk about things that would not normally be addressed in conversation here; yet are a part of everyday life in SA.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

For the most part I enjoyed my IPSU courses and thought the subject matter was interesting.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

Not applicable.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Encourage more students to take mainstream courses and provide more information regarding them. Not that many people seemed to take them.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I knew that I wanted to come to South Africa. My school only offers two programs in here, CIEE: Cape Town and CIEE: Stellenbosch. The reasons why I chose this program over Cape Town is because 1.) I knew that the size of the group here was much smaller, 2.) I wasn't sure that I wanted to live in a city, and knew that I would still be close enough to visit, and 3.) I heard great things about the head advisor.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

I thought the theme of transformation was woven in nicely to the activities that we did. It just seemed to pop up, like at the lion's head hike, and at our farewell dinner.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I did not do the service module or Pebbles, but I did do a few community outreach projects as a part of my HIV and AIDS class. The first one we did, we went to Kayamandi and encouraged the people walking about to go to the center to get tested. We also handed out condoms and gave pamphlets.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I would most definitely recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students. I am going to talk it up as much as I can when I get back to my home university.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

[Omitted]

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I was not sure what to expect when I came here. I really had no idea of how it was going to be. But I am leaving here having had an amazing experience; and have definitely grown so much from this place and the people I have met.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

When the group went on the trip to the Khoi San cultural lodge, there was a bachelor's party at the next camp site. Their van accidentally stopped at our campsite and all of the guys got out. They were extremely drunk and being disruptive, and some of use girls tried to get them to go away. They would not listen to us however because we were female.

Kate

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I would like to have had more information on Carpathia vs. Lusitania in terms of the reality of my life in each of the places. Things such as meal times, house meetings, possible random move out dates ect.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

I thought the orientation was very well put together in terms of the relaxed and intimate setting. The program was structured well in terms of the guest speaker and the getting to know you information

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

Again with the housing, it would be nice if the student was told the realities of living in the dorms vs. with the other international students. The activities were varied and exciting and I really enjoyed them. In the future I understand the two day hike up table mountain is no longer done, but it may be useful to give the group a choice.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I found burts course very rewarding. I would have liked to learn more about specific Stellenbosch culture, but overall it made me think outside of the box.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The international courses were absolutly phenomenal. I have learned so much this semester from my various courses, and it is so incredible when you can see the issues you learn about happening around you. It really stimulates the thinking

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

The one course I had was alright, I did not particularly enjoy the professor and the students were polite but not engaging.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

Keep up the good work with the international courses and the CIEE seminar

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I found that this program matched what I most wanted out of my experience. The material was presented in an organized and exciting way.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Very effective.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I loved the pebbles project and I would recommend it to everyone who comes through here. I did not find the Kyamundi project as fulfilling but others may find what they are looking for there.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

In terms of the CIEE program it is much more personal, and centered around the individual needs. It is very easy to get help and access your advisors or the international office. The international classes offered were also incredible. If you are looking for a small college town with great student life then this is the place.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The people. The group we had really made my experience. Even if we all did not hang out together, we all seemed to get along really well. I really enjoyed all of the trips we took, and the delicious dinners of course.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

I don't know if the program can do much about this, but I found it hard to integrate with South African students as much as I would have liked to.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I would say I gained the maximum benefit from this program

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

It is a very different country. In terms of race, though not effected negatively, racism was everywhere especially in a town like Stellenbosch. It is something that I was not completely prepared for, and I was accosted many times in terms of views on race that I did not agree with. Gender relations are still tricky here, it is very traditional and can be hard to get used to.

Mark

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The orientation session was very succinct and informative on a number of important issues. I found the lecture/presentation by the professor to be somewhat irrelevant, but otherwise I enjoyed the CIEE orientation.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

Burt's seminar was fantastic. He is great at communicating the difficulties we often have interpreting culture and what ways we each understand other cultures in a more mindful, informed way,

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

In all honesty, I did not find my courses as academically or intellectually stimulating as I would hope they could be. This may have had to do with my course selection as well, but overall I was not as academically challenged or inspired to work this semester.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

I would encourage students to take mainstream courses if possible. From my understanding these courses were much more stimulating than the IPSU courses which I took.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I chose Stellenbosch based on my interest in social justice. The service module program was a perfect fit for my academic interests.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Burt and John were extremely informative and adept at relating the reality of South Africa as accurately as could be understood for us in the few months we were there. Burt's CIEE seminar course was especially helpful in this regard.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

My service module course was fantastic. Clark and my entire class provided an extremely supportive, inspiring, and empowering environment for me to understand the components of community development.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

For me, Stellenbosch was an extremely difficult, but simultaneously rewarding place to study abroad. Seeing South Africa, or Africa in general, from a privileged perspective.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

The trips to Robben Island, Bo Kaap, and the trips to Kirstenbosch were very enjoyable.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

Shia

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

I feel as if I was well prepared.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

I found the CIEE orientation very helpful and informative. I really liked to format and being able to ask Burt and John questions.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I really enjoyed living in Lusitania but, I was not exactly sure of the differences between the different living options prior to arriving in Stellenbosch.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I didn't take the course.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I enjoyed taking classes with students from different countries.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

I did not take any regular university courses.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

I really enjoyed the IPSU courses. The teachers were great and it was interesting to take political science courses with people from outside the US.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I really enjoyed that CIEE offered a smaller program with a lot of excursions.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

I didn't find the program to be particularly effective in addressing the theme of "Transformation". However, I did not take the CIEE specific course.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

I participated in Pebbles Project and I really enjoyed it. I liked working with children and being fully immersed in an Afrikaans speaking environment.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I would definitely recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination. It was a beautiful place to live and learn. It has a lot of culture and a lot of interesting things to do. I felt safe and comfortable.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

It is hard to choose just one highlight! The entire program was great. I really liked the small group size and all of the excursions.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

Possibly require all students to take the CIEE specific class.

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I feel as if I had a very fulfilling study abroad experience. The program helped me feel confident in foreign situations. It met all of my expectations and exceeded them.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Volunteering for the Pebbles Project was a very rewarding experience but I was confronted with the realities of South Africa's poverty. One of the children at the creche was HIV positive and it opened my eyes to very real issues that South Africa is experiencing. However, it was amazing to interact with these children and their teacher.

Lauren

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The orientation was great about informing us about things we might encounter. It was simple material that was easy to process and understand.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

I would have appreciated more information on the resident hall I chose to live in before making my decision to live there. I did not feel I was given enough information about the different options in order to make a well-informed choice. Carpathia was a huge disappointment, and if I was aware of things such as limited dining hours, blatant racism towards international students by students in leadership positions (hakkas), lack of communal microwaves, poor laundry facilities, and mandatory meetings; I would have chosen differently and that choice would have enhanced my experience instead of taken away from it. I paid way too much money to have an unsafe living environment throughout my entire stay in South Africa. The final straw for me was when we had to move out for our semester break, we should have known about the fact that this COULD happen; though it had not in the past. In the states, none of this would be acceptable, and though it was a difference environment I still expect integrity in the process of placing me in a housing assignment. How can CIEE trust that we as international students will be taken care of properly and treated respectfully when these are the things I had to deal with, along with my fellow international students? Our "international" hakka was no help whatsoever, she never followed through with her promises to put on programs to help us get to know domestic students, and I had no way of holding her accountable. CIEE should protect their students from having a hostile living environment, we should not be placed with domestic students if we aren't welcome there. It should be about the student safety instead of making money off of us. I almost chose to leave the program because I hated waking up every morning in that environment, and felt the people in charge (hakkas) were aggressive and unwelcoming which made every day harsh. The only reason I stayed was because of my friends that I did make, and the job I had working at [a local] Primary School. I think the other international groups don't allow their students to live in Carpathia for a reason, and this should be reconsidered before others make the mistake I did.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I enjoyed the CIEE seminar, Burt is brilliant at making me think outside of my own experiences. He made me want to understand other points of view, and he helped me re-frame many situations that could have been crippling without his patience and meaningful lectures.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I did not feel the courses were that great. Because I'm international I felt like the professors weren't challenging me or putting an actual effort into teaching me the course material. Everything but three courses were a waste of my time.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

My university recommended CIEE, and supports CIEE above the other programs offered.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

I think this is a reflection on our head advisor. The art of transformation cannot be executed without someone at the head that others are willing to listen to and follow. Burt is the best, hands down. He helped me open my mind beyond restrictions. We had difficult conversations in a comfortable environment, and he helped me understand South Africa in ways that i wasn't willing to see before he took the time to help me.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

The program was amazing. I don't take things at face value, and my feedback is to enhance future programs; so please stay with me. I think the service module was great, but there were also parts of the program that could use some help. For one, Clark is great- he's wise and intelligent and I enjoyed learning from him, but he kept comparing my group of service module students to the past groups. This made the environment uneasy for me, because I felt like there was always an undertone of "give us money." It was hard for me to want to donate my time because he made me feel like time wasn't good enough, and that I had to give my things to the children or buy the school something in order to "leave a legacy" or be remembered. It was distasteful, and when I look back on the experience I hate that part the most. Also, CEM students should be informed about the disciplinary methods used at [the primary school]. I was not aware that I would be witnessing corporal punishment, it was hard for me to deal with and when I brought it to Clark he just kept telling me about historical perspectives. But how is change made? Is it made by people dismissing the wrong that they see? Making excuses for injustices so they feel better about themselves? No, it's someone standing up for that injustice, that wrong-doing. I stood up, in a submissive way, and my concerns were met with excuses. How can the learning service project be successful if we can't hold each other accountable? It was difficult. Through and through I learned a lot, and I absolutely adored my learners and host teacher.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

I wouldn't recommend Stellenbosch for anyone to study. That place is so negatively charged with emotion it was physically disabling. I enjoyed being challenged by being doubted by all around me.

The domestic students either hated me because of my sexuality and nationality or loved me. I've never been in such an extreme environment. It was good for my personal growth because of my privilege here in the states, meaning it was nice to see a different point of view- to be the minority. With that being said, Stellenbosch isn't ready for America. In my experience, it isn't ready to get past the excuses to treat each other as less than human beings. It hasn't moved past the Apartheid, you see it on every street corner, lurking in the Neelsie, and it's very prominent in Carpathia as well. There is a cloud over that entire town and community, and though change is happening it isn't happening effectively enough. Please don't just dismiss my experience, I know I'm extreme but these words have been thought about time and time again; I'm choosing my words wisely. I feel like I'm more than an outsider looking in, especially because I was involved in so many different societies and activities; those activities helped me have a well rounded view of Stellenbosch. Burt is the shining star there, and if it wasn't for him and the CEM project Stellenbosch would be off my list of recommendations completely. All this being said, I would not have picked another place; what's life without its challenges? I'm blessed to have gone abroad, and it was a life changing experience.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Burt, when we left Stellenbosch, and the life long friends I made within the CIEE group. Also, the support of John and Burt; I always knew they were there for anything that I needed and they always had an answer or a question to help me find the answer myself.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

I thought we would be doing more excursions or meetings throughout the semester instead of just heavily at the beginning.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I experienced severe sexism. As a woman in South Africa I was expected to play a role, one of submission and stupidity. If you've ever met me, I have an opinion, and if you ask for it you will get it. I'm an individual not just a sex organ, but that wasn't the case in SA. The people that I experienced were disgustingly racist towards each other. Many of the people I encountered were also awful to Americans. We had water balloons thrown at us, had racial slurs directed at us, were told to leave, and were called ignorant. I'm sorry, but Stellenbosch has no room to talk about ignorance. I've never been surrounded by something like this before, I've never felt so much hate, rage, entitlement, and pain in my entire life. People like that wouldn't survive here, I'm just glad that I survived Stellenbosch. I hope someday the people there open their minds to other ways of life. Most people think South Africa will never change, but I believe it is full of good people who just don't know that they can change the world around them. There are no simple answers to these problems; but I have faith life will only get better.

Alec

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

Not at all I felt they covered all the bases very well. I was so impressed with this program.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Burt and John made the process smooth and not boring. I enjoyed the orientation.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

The San cultural overnight was neat but I feel a more intense immersion into a village would be more interesting.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

I loved my program in South Africa. Burt and John are incredible program directors. I could have never had the experience that I did without them. I left South Africa not wanting to leave. Even as I write this I am flooded with hundreds of wonderful memories. I love South Africa and the program CIEE has made there. I am so fortunate to have picked CIEE.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

[Omitted]

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

[Omitted]

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

maybe more encouragement for the students to utilize office hour time with professors.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

My program director suggested it.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Excellent!!!

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

[Omitted]

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

YES YES YES a million times over!

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Burt and John kind and patient personalities made all issues I had much more manageable. They work so hard at their jobs and are excellent people for this type of work.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

Sidney

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

Nope.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Strengths: Before university orientation. Focused on getting the CIEE group oriented to each other, our staff, and the town we are in. Weaknesses: I would have liked more information about the systems of South Africa, apart from the town and university. Esp. the history.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

The lecturers do not seem to be as connected to the university system as I am used to. This detracted from the experience. The grading system was especially confusing, as the lecturers did not know how to grade us appropriately in order for us to get credit.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

It was a good experience to sit along side host nationals in one of my classes, though I would have liked more classes like this.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

I chose Stellenbosch for the living environment. I specifically wanted to be in a dorm alongside other South African students. I achieved this and couldn't have been more pleased.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Effective. We examined transformation in South Africa, as well as personally.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

Pebbles was a truly rewarding experience! I enjoyed my time spent with the children and learned a lot about the importance of just being with people.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Stellenbosch is a quiet university town full of its own life. It has a wide range of opportunities available academically. The location is absolutely picturesque, and just a jump away from many other adventures you are sure to have in Cape Town or down the Garden Route.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Staying in Carpathia was definitely something I would encourage. Also, Burt and John are an excellent team of Head/Secondary Advisor that offered guidance and assistance, without whom this experience would not have been complete.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

Reese

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

Packing wise yes, I had to buy a lot of new things here that I rather should have packed but did not think I would need them.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Strengths-It made me take a step back and try to adjust properly Weaknesses-It was a long day, maybe could have been split up?

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

N/A

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

They were thought provoking and forced introspection that was necessary for growth.

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I absolutely loved the courses I took.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

N/A

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

I honestly learned more through this entire experience-in and out of class-than I have in my 3 years of college.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

It was a smaller town and seemed less intimidating than other programs I had researched.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Very effective as I feel I have made a major transformation.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

They changed my life. I wish to continue doing work like that in the future. The projects were so meaningful.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

DEFINITELY.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

It is difficult to pick just one, every day was a new adventure. Every excursion taught me something new.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

N/A

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The program was able to facilitate my growth as a person. I believe that because of CIEE I am able to take away so much more from this experience than I may have otherwise.

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

I do not think I ever thought about race as much as I do here in SA. It has such a prominent role in the history and politics and social interactions. The dynamics truly fascinate me.

Robin

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

[Omitted]

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

Strengths: FAQs answered, walk through of all necessary information Weaknesses: nonw

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

[Omitted]

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

Easy to understand and fun

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

I was able to learn a lot in the courses offered. The quality of the courses were informative and at a decent pace.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

Lectures were taught directly from the textbook while I was expecting more information from the lecturer along with the textbook material.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

[Omitted]

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

CIEE was one of two programs offered at my home university. Between the two CIEE was the only program that has a program in South Africa.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

Very effective. The theme of transformation was discussed in group weekly.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

Being involved helped me to understand South African community better.

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Stellenbosch is a nice quiet town where people are friendly and is close to Cape Town and tourist attractions. It is also a great place to go to school and has everything that one would need to study abroad for a semester or two.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

outings to academic/historic destinations

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

The country, the university, fellow students (local and international) culture and volunteer experiences were far beyond my expectations. This entire experience

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

On occasion local coloured people mistaken me to also be a coloured.

Orson

Q6: Are there facts about the program, host institution, or program location that you believe you should have been told about but were not? Please comment.

No.

Q8: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CIEE orientation?

The leaders were engaging, encouraging, helpful, and knowledgeable.

Q12: Please offer suggestions as to how we might improve housing, housing services, activities, and excursions.

More excursions would be beneficial, as would a little more independence upon each trip.

Q15: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of CIEE courses; i.e. courses attended solely by program students.

[Omitted]

Q16: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of courses for foreigners; i.e. courses taken at the host university with other foreign students.

Professor seemed to have low expectations of international students.

Q17: If applicable, please comment on the overall quality of regular university courses; i.e. courses taken at the host university and attended by host nationals.

I struggled only because I was not prepared for the difficulty of the course and the high expectations of the professor expectations of South African students.

Q18: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the academic elements? How might we improve the program academically?

I wouldn't make any changes except to encourage program participants to take courses not specifically limited to international students.

Q19: Please comment on your primary motivation for choosing this program over other programs in South Africa.

There were no other options from my homeschool for South Africa. My university had strong ties and good experiences with CIEE in the past.

Q20: Please comment on the program's effectiveness in addressing the overall theme of "Transformation" this semester.

One of the most beneficial things I did while abroad was my volunteering with the children of Pebbles Project. It was from them that I learned the most about myself.

Q21: Please comment on the community-based learning projects in which you were involved this semester.

[Omitted]

Q22: Based on your experience this semester, why would you recommend Stellenbosch as a study abroad destination for future students?

Without a doubt in my mind. Stellenbosch is a must see, and I owe my entire overall experience to CIEE.

Q23: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the CIEE Stellenbosch program?

Going on all of the excursions.

Q32: Please offer comments on how the program might better achieve its program goals.

[Omitted]

Q33: Please offer comments on your evaluation of the program in the context of your expectations, abilities, and your efforts to gain the maximum benefit from the study abroad experience.

[Omitted]

Q34: Please comment on particular experiences that you had with regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

[Omitted]

ADDENDUM B

PERMISSION TO USE THE SURVEYS



6 July 2012

Dear Dr. Oostendorp:

PERMISSION TO USE CIEE SURVEY DATA

Permission is hereby given for Mr J.R. Warren to use the data from the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) student surveys (Spring 2009 – Fall 2011) regarding the CIEE Stellenbosch Study Center for his research in accordance with the ethics policy of the University of Stellenbosch. This is subject to the proviso that all details which may be used to identify CIEE students or staff members are changed, and that the source of data is acknowledged as CIEE.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adam Rubin', written over a horizontal dashed line.

Adam Rubin
Senior Program Director: Africa, Asia Pacific, and Middle East
CIEE International Study Programs