

This is an ambitious year for *Frontiers*. In addition to this eclectic volume of articles, we will be collaborating with the Forum on Education Abroad on two Special Issues: A History of Study Abroad, Beginnings to 1965 and our second Undergraduate Research volume. We are grateful to the IFSA Foundation for providing the funding that helps to make these publications possible.

Both the History of Study Abroad and the Undergraduate Research volume will debut at the Forum Conference in Austin, Texas, March 1–3, 2007. The History is written by Bill Hoffa, and it is landmark publication that provides insight into the development of study abroad as a field. Bill's research and writing makes our work more meaningful, and we are pleased to be able to publish it.

The second Undergraduate Research volume contains a wide range of examples of student research conducted as part of study abroad. In this volume we are pleased to provide another perspective on this example of student learning: that of the on-site faculty advisor. We have asked faculty who advised and supervised the student research on-site to discuss the meaning of the research within the context of the local community in which it was conducted. The introduction to this volume by Paul Houlihan, President of the School for Field Studies, discusses the importance of considering the needs and perspectives of the communities in which our students conduct their research.

Our partnership with the Forum continues to produce important results that benefit the field of education abroad. We look forward to publishing a third volume featuring Undergraduate Research (2008) as well as Part Two of the History of Study Abroad in this ongoing collaboration. Other special projects are also being planned to benefit both *Frontiers* readers and Forum members.

This volume at hand reflects our commitment to publishing a wide variety of approaches to understanding study abroad. The lead article by J. Kline Harrison, "The Relationship between International Study Tour Effects and the Personality Variables of Self-Monitoring and Core Self-Evaluations" provides more data on the outcomes of short-term study abroad, in this case business study tours that are embedded within home campus courses. Harrison investigates the perceived effectiveness of these tours and the associated impact on two personality variables: "self-monitoring" and "core self-evaluations." The results of this research inform us about the benefits of this type of study abroad and also about instruments that may be useful to employ in other studies assessing the impact of study abroad.

Our second article is from colleagues at the Lienhard School of Nursing at Pace University, Sophie R. Kaufman, David N. Ekstrom, and Lillie M. Shortridge-Baggett. Their article, "Assessing International Opportunities in

Higher Education: A Matrix-based Assessment Tool,” presents a means to evaluate strategically international program opportunities on our campuses and within our organizations. The authors draw on their implementation of this assessment tool on their own campus to make a case for it. At a time when many of us are faced with often competing ideas for study abroad expansion, this tool may very well prove to be useful for helping us to make strategic decisions.

In her article, “Re-Reading Student Texts: Intertextuality and Constructions of Self and Other in the Contact Zone,” Karen Rodriguez, a Resident Director in Guanajuato, Mexico, expands our understanding of study abroad texts, identities, pedagogy and student learning. Using a student’s poem as her starting point, Rodriguez applies insights from critical theory to analyze the study abroad learning environment. Her article prompts us to consider the multiple ways in which our students are engaged in an ongoing textual interplay in which they are simultaneously writers, co-writers, and texts being written.

Jacqueline McLaughlin and Kent Johnson offer a fruitful way to frame the short-term study abroad experience in order to maximize student learning and the assessment of learning outcomes. In their “Assessing the Field Course Experiential Learning Model: Transforming Collegiate Short-term Study Abroad Experiences into Rich Learning Environments,” the authors aim to present a program model that facilitates critical thinking while engaging students in active scientific inquiry. Presenting a case study of their three-week course in Costa Rica, McLaughlin and Johnson provide an example of how to integrate curricular design with assessment practice.

In his “Ethnographic Inquiry: Reframing the Learning Core of Education Abroad,” Anthony Ogden uses case studies and theories about intercultural competency in order to propose that ethnographic inquiry become the core of our education abroad programs. Ogden takes us through the various facets of education abroad programs and discusses the value of integrating an ethnographic approach into each one to yield more effective learning outcomes. He emphasizes that to incorporate this learning paradigm does not require a complete overhaul of programs, but rather a reframing of them.

The final two articles in this volume offer differing viewpoints on study abroad in non-traditional locations. In his “Non-traditional Study Abroad Destinations: Analysis of a Trend,” Ryan Wells defines and discusses study in non-traditional locations by comparing the benefits of and rationales for these programs with those of study abroad programs in traditional locations. Wells concludes that based on his analysis study abroad in non-traditional locations appears to help individuals, institutions, and society to meet their respective goals for education abroad.

## Introduction

Michael Woolf presents a different view in his “Come and See the Poor People: The Pursuit of Exotica.” He argues that study abroad in non-traditional locations is proceeding without enough thought being given to the intellectual and academic reasons for it. Woolf asserts that what is attracting the development of study abroad in non-traditional locations more often than not is a fascination with the exotic, and that this is not a desirable or realistic way to develop such programs, especially when education abroad, more than ever, needs to be taken seriously.

I want to take this opportunity once again to thank our institutional sponsors. Their continued support of *Frontiers* makes it possible to publish what we hope are thought-provoking and useful articles that shed light on the work of study abroad. I want also to extend a special thanks to those colleagues who have served as reviewers of manuscripts for this volume. *Frontiers* is very much a collaborative effort and our continued growth and success is widely shared.

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