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Experience: Stories Beyond the Classroom, a College of Humanities student journal, publishes essays that capture learning through experience. Through a single story, students show how they integrated their studies with an internship or study abroad. Experience is about engaging the world outside our campus.

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All around me I was surrounded with works that, until that point, I had only seen printed out in little CMYK rectangles in textbooks or glowingly projected on white walls in classrooms. I could hear Dr. Swensen’s voice in my head as I passed Homer’s Old Mistress and walked around Power’s Greek Slave. I saw texture and depth and movement.

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When we arrived in Catalonia, I had wondered if we would see any evidence of the struggle for independence. Now, at a public and globally televised event, I was confronted with thousands of Esteladas.

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Learning through Stories

Take a look at the way students are thriving from experiential learning in the college. It isn’t about just giving students a hands-on experience. It’s about giving them an experience and allowing them to reflect on that experience.
I recently had the chance to attend a national gathering of deans at which one of the guest speakers was Jaime Casap, the “Global Education Evangelist” at Google. In addressing your generation’s future prospects, he noted that we have entered an unprecedented age of integrative technology and information access. This will change the fundamental questions students ask from “What will I be when I grow up?” or “What job will I hold?” to “What problems do I want to solve?” By this he implies that, from this moment forward, the arc of your lives as graduates will be unique in human history. Your quest will not be about finding a single job to settle into and retire from forty years later, but more like building throughout your life upon the foundation you have gained in college as you acquire the pieces necessary to solve the problems that matter to you. His prediction makes sense, given the way our society and our world is changing. But I also see that we can bring an expanded perspective to this sea change from the integrated spiritual and academic educations represented by a BYU humanities degree. Just as, through experiential learning, you have added important complementary components to your humanities education—“Humanities+”—you have also added a tutorial in following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This inspired learning will fundamentally alter, in profound ways, the course of your life if you follow your inner promptings, both in terms of where to go next and what problems you most want to solve. Use this great gift of an integrated education as a tool to solve personal, family, community, national, and global problems and you will find yourselves embarking on a lifelong voyage that will send you forth to serve in some uncharted, and remarkable, territory.

J. SCOTT MILLER
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

Dean’s Message

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Bayley Goldsberry

Bayley Goldsberry
My first experience with “Frost at Midnight” was perfunctory: a homework assignment I sped through near midnight through eyes half-crusted with sleep. My headphones dangled, one in my ear, one out, the pounding music disrupting the silence of my late-night apartment, scrambling the words of the poem into mush. When I finished reading, I closed my anthology, thoroughly underwhelmed, and I went to bed.

The next day I encountered “Frost at Midnight” again. The room was silent. My professor read it out loud in class. He cried.

The professor paused, gathered his thoughts. And he set the scene—England. Shortly before the Napoleonic Wars. Tensions high. At any moment, France could invade England, and here was a young Samuel Taylor Coleridge, staring petrified into the mottled embers of a dying fire late on a winter’s night in his cottage, his infant son dozing beside him. As the flickering gold illuminated his face, carving shadowy echoes of future wrinkles into his cheeks and forehead, Coleridge thought ahead to a future where England lost, where his wife, his son—

The professor paused, gathered his thoughts. And he set the scene—England. Shortly before the Napoleonic Wars. Tensions high. At any moment, France could invade England, and here was a young Samuel Taylor Coleridge, staring petrified into the mottled embers of a dying fire late on a winter’s night in his cottage, his infant son dozing beside him. As the flickering gold illuminated his face, carving shadowy echoes of future wrinkles into his cheeks and forehead, Coleridge thought ahead to a future where England lost, where his wife, his son, were in danger. When that couldn’t be borne, further, pushing past his fears until his thoughts emerged to the future he dreamed of: one of wandering and clouds and freedom, one custom-made for his son.

“It thrills my heart with tender gladness,” he wrote, maybe brushing a curl of his son’s hair aside, “thus to look at thee, and think that thou shalt learn far other lore, and in far other scenes!” There, back in the cold basement classroom, I got it.

Growing up, my sisters were always collecting ephemera: bits of ribbon, pieces of paper, stones. We would come home from walks through wooded swamps and turn out our pockets. Haley would have a rock, cracked down the center to reveal the dark purples of a geode; Natalie would have an inchworm, folded in half; Elise would have a snake. All my pockets would hold was lint. Haley’s rock would join a collection of shinier stones forced to jangle together in a shoebox under her bed; Natalie’s inchworm would be left in our back garden; Elise’s snake set free. When I noticed that my pockets were empty—again—my stomach would lurch, as if I had stumbled into a river deeper than I had expected. How had I gathered nothing when it felt like I had been a part of everything? All I
I knew that time was slipping and unreliable, still all things connected: that bridge the site of a great battle, that tree the beginning of a journey, and stories hidden in every aspect of the yard, in every overturned stump.

"Dumb mail!"

"Dunviril. Legendary ruler of Cum-brie. King woken up yearly by soldiers banging some sticks around his grave?"

For a moment I am frozen by panic, questions clattering through my mind, pebbles in a stream: did I miss some essential day of school in which we discussed legendary English kings and how to wake them? If so, what else did we talk about on that day?

The blank look I give my co-worker in response is more than a look, it is an expression that has no idea what you are saying so please explain. It’s an expression that has taught everyone who views it, I am new and very much American and have no idea what you are saying so please explain. It’s an expression that has been called to my face many, many times this summer, for everything from “Owz’t ga’an?” to Wellies to quartered tomatoes in salad. So many times I walked over in my mind, then taking a scalpel to it. When I feel left behind at work, as the curators relate an anecdote about a lesser-known character in my English classes like the poet is an old friend they all know, but I’ve somehow never been introduced to, uncertainty floods me, a reservoir of doubt filling rapidly. At some point, I think in those moments, they will have to discover I am a fraud. Don’t they know I’ve been fooling them all!

But they don’t, and I’m not. I know the same stories, mostly, and I have read the same poems, and if there are places where my knowledge does not completely interact with theirs, I am constantly expanding my own circle of experience, uncovering more places where we overlap. Most of the time I push aside the doubts, focusing instead on being present, on connecting with a culture that is not my own. Any time an unfamiliar word comes out of someone’s mouth I pause, spinning the word over in my mind, then taking a scalpel to it. When I feel left behind at work, as the curators relate an anecdote about a lesser-known character in my English classes like the poet is an old friend they all know, but I’ve somehow never been introduced to, uncertainty floods me, a reservoir of doubt filling rapidly. At some point, I think in those moments, they will have to discover I am a fraud. Don’t they know I’ve been fooling them all?

There, back in the cold basement classroom, I got it.

And then I remember I have a tour to give or a sheep-patterned scarf to sell or a hundred pages of Wordsworth’s biography to read by Monday, and the feeling disappears.

My junior year of college I was assigned to make a critical edition of an unknown Victorian novel: I had to create footnotes, appendices, and an introduction that could push a long-forgotten book into the literary canon, uploaded to Scholars Archive where it could gather digital dust until someone decided to drag it out into the light.

The potential discovery of a classic thrilled me. That is, until I realized the book I’d chosen—Wild Mike and His Victim—wasn’t a book about a rampaging Victorian serial killer after all, and was instead about a sickly child and the bully who tormented him. Legal documents would have been more exciting.

In spite of my complaints, my professor encouraged me to dig deep with my research, and so I did, combing through several-hundred-year-old periodicals, hunting down information about hospitals and children and Great Ormond Street with a single-mindedness determined to destroy my annoyance. Many of these newspapers suggested seaside retreats as the ultimate cure for children with life-threatening illnesses. It was funny, a bit, this strange detail from an old newspaper. It very firmly drew a line between me and the past.
One afternoon, I discovered a yellowed stub that hypothesized that illnesses were caused by city-wide bad air, and that the air by the sea was full of tiny anti-germs: good air that could cancel out the unhealthy molecules clogging the city skies. The sea, the writer urged, might save a child.

I felt it then that sense of an intersection: someone else’s search for their own far other scenes colliding with my own. These people I had quietly sniggered at weren’t superstitious or silly at all. Their search had been scientific at heart: informed by the information available to them.

Time shifted. The line between Then and Now vanished, became an equal sign.

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It is around 10:30 on a summer night in Grasmere and my curtains are wide open. Through the glass, the white outline of Dove Cottage haunts the Corpse Road, a specter standing guard over a thin paved road. Blue moonlight spills through filtered trees, past Dove Cottage, and into my room, throwing a patch of watery light onto my bed. I don’t move. I’m having one of those strange time-slipping moments again; thinking of a line from Dorothy Wordsworth’s journal about a time her brother William did the very thing I’m doing, just across the road. He slept with his curtains open to see the moon, too.

More than anything this summer has tied me to Grasmere and its inhabitants, teaching me far other lore, carefully constructing connections between me and my surroundings. Connections to the shepherds who stacked the grey lines snaking across the hills, to the Romantics weaving worlds from their words. To the visitors who come in each day, to the housemates I live with. To the thought of future people sleeping in a room across from Grasmere lake and watching the moon fill their window with its quiet light.
Going to India wasn’t something I sought out; it fell into my lap during Somatics, a class required for the BFA in Dance program. Somatics is an approach to dance performance that focuses on the experience of the performer. This mindful perspective on performing refocused my thoughts away from the expectations of an audience, and to my own mental and physical happenings.

In each class, I became more aware of breath as an impetus for movement. An inhale of oxygen became my preparation for movement, and each exhale took each gesture through space. Over the semester, I noticed my central core to the space I danced in through my upper and lower limbs. Each arm and leg would stretch through the air. My core was energized as the sole connector between them. By the end of the course, I had a desire to explore somatic approaches to dance. Professor Roper approached the class about a need for research assistants for a project just before finals, and I knew that this would be my ticket to further understanding of somatics. I sent in my application that day. A few weeks later I accepted a research assistant position that would look at how somatic approaches to choreography facilitate cross-cultural dance exchange.

Three months later I was boarding a plane to Dubai, our connecting flight to Bengaluru, India—the site of our research. The day after arriving in Bengaluru, I stood with Poornima, my choreographer and collaborator on the project, about to start our rehearsal. “So, do you have any experience in Odissi dance, or even classical Indian dance?”

“No,” I sheepishly smiled, “I’m just here.”

Over the next two weeks Poornima initiated me into the world of classical Indian dance and her focus on Odissi dance. This form of classical Indian dance originates from ancient Hindu temples. For our research we were to choreograph solo performances and discuss throughout the rehearsal process how our focus on our personal experiences while dancing impacted our connection to the choreography.

As she based her choreography for me on the journey she experienced, I found my own journey of struggling connect to a foreign movement. I felt uncomfortable in my skin, trying to comprehend the intricate details of every stomp, jump and mudra. Poornima placed each finger and tilted her head as if it was breathing. I froze. Poised in her upper body, but grounded to the earth as if her feet were roots, Poornima danced. Tense in my shoulders and stiff in my feet, I failed to find my footing. According to Poornima, Odissi students do not begin learning choreography before two years of studying the style. For two years students attend rigorous classes. They perfect their technique. They study under their gurus, their expert teachers. For two years. I had nine days.

On the sixth day of our project, Poornima decided to focus on the end section of the piece. In this part, I described the Hindu goddess of courage as I sustained mudras and symbols associated with the goddess. Poornima could not decide between two poses to use when the vocalist for the piece’s music sings the word “courage.” Her focus than turned to me as she asked, “In which pose do you feel the most courageous?” My internal struggles with the solo gnawed at me, but I knew that to answer her question honestly. I had to let go of my thoughts and reflect on my experience in the dance. I chose a pose. As I took the wide and open pose, I felt stable, grounded, connected to a dance step I had never experienced before. I was ready to

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take on anything about to come my way. This connection to the dance studio floor shifted my focus away from my personal expectations of technical perfection. Instead, I looked inward to my own personal experience with what the choreography was trying to say. Applying principles from Somatics in this moment changed my approach for the rest of the project. As I went forward in the rehearsal I focused not merely on the steps but the story I told.

One rehearsal, Poornima explained to me the significance of the beginning section of the piece where I stamp repeatedly around the perimeter of the stage. Following the traditional structure of an Odissi piece, this part specifically brought her back to her time working as an architect. Before sketching, she would clear the space around her, as she could not work in a cluttered area. Poornima explained to me that in this section of the piece, as we prepared and cleared the area for dancing and as we walked the pathway that she envisioned in her mind, memories of her past profession came back to her. It was as if she was physically experiencing being an architect again. As I joined her in circumscribing the floor with stomping steps, I could visually see myself in her office, setting down a piece of paper on a newly cleared space, about to sketch. We had only met hours before, but we experienced this unity as we moved together. Discussing about the remembrance of her architect rituals led her to open up to me about a time in her life when she worked as an architect as well as an Odissi performer and her struggle in trying to serve two creatively taxing passions simultaneously. Her struggle set her on a journey to search for which profession she should choose, as trying to give everything to two loves in her life was no longer possible. We danced together, talking about her life. As Poornima and I continued to rehearse the solo, I found my personal experiences of a transformation adding emotional connection to the portrayal of Poornima’s decision to pursue dance completely. In her expression of her own journey, Poornima gave me a way to portray and express to the world my journey as well. Now each time I dance her choreography, it is as if she is there with me and is saying, “I know what you’ve gone through.”
Sometimes when I look up at the mountains on the Wasatch Front, I am reminded of my great-great grandmother, Michela Serrecchia. She was born in Bovino, a small hill town surrounded by the rugged mountains of southern Italy. Those mountains are not unlike the Utah mountains I know so well. This woman is my namesake, so throughout my life I have often stared at her picture, searching for some semblance of myself in her face. In the one picture we have of her, she wears a plain black blouse, a dusty apron, and a creased brow—the consequences, I imagine, of losing a husband, of raising eight children on her own, and of watching those children eventually immigrate to America without her. Perhaps after experiencing so much anguish during her life, she couldn’t bear to leave Bovino, couldn’t tear herself away from the people and mountains that had become a part of her. But in her picture, despite her heavy expression, her small, feisty frame stands proudly with hands on hips and head held high.

Growing up, I wasn’t necessarily proud of my name, even though it had a strong family tie. On the first day of school, my new teacher would reach my name on the role, squint at the unique spelling, and invariably botch the pronunciation. Rather than correct my teacher, I would simply raise my hand and call out, “Here!” I thought it wasn’t worth fussing over. After all, it was only a name. In the event that the teacher wanted to know how to pronounce my name, I would sheepishly say, “Mi-KAY-la. It’s the Italian spelling,” and hope they would move on to the next student on the roll.

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In the winter of 2017, I attended an orientation class in preparation for the British Literature and Landscape Study Abroad.
Brenton Jackson

study abroad experience. Being well acquainted with all things BBC, I went into the class with some basic awareness of British culture and language—for instance, what Americans think of as fries are called chips, and what Americans call chips are called crisps. My professor explained that as part of the course requirements during the trip, we would need to write about an experience talking with a local. In light of that assignment, and in order to avoid our offending the locals, my professor explained the difference between England, Great Britain, the United Kingdom, and the British Isles, and advised us to keep them straight. We were to avoid making the mistake of calling a Welshman English, or a Scot British. Not anticipating this being much of a problem, I made a mental note about the impending writing assignment, and quickly forgot about it.

***

A few weeks into the trip, I sat on a double-decker bus with a few fellow students, the lush landscape of the Lake District blurring in and out of my view. English oak trees. Grey-stoned cottages. Glittering blackwater ponds. Patchwork fields dotted with sheep. A small, older man sat hunched over in the seat across from me, and when he caught my eye, he flashed me a good-natured, slanted smile and introduced himself.

“My name is Mal,” he declared, “short for Malcolm—which I hate.”

Our bus wound down a twisting, narrow road, and Mal began recounting many fond memories of walking—the English word for hiking—in the Lake District.

After a few minutes, I pointed up at the cliffs.

“Those aren’t mountains,” Mal interrupted. “There aren’t any mountains around here—only fells.”

My face reddened. His chastising remark stung.

“I had never heard the term fells before; they looked like mountains to me. Mal’s voice softened as he explained that “fell” is the Lake District term for the surrounding peaks. He told me that he had been visiting the area yearly since he was a boy and insisted that I identify them correctly. I was immediately reminded of my professor’s earlier admonition. Of all ways I could have possibly offended a local, I did not anticipate that using the term “mountain” would be one of them. I sat back in my seat and wondered why the name mattered so much to him.

Then I reflected back on my own experiences having my name mispronounced and realized that I had never defended my name the way Mal defended the fells. I could sense his passion for a place he loved fiercely, its name being an extension of that place. His expression reminded me of my great-great grandmother from the black-and-white photograph. Picturing her determined brow and hands on hips made me wonder—is there any part of her strength in me?

Suddenly I was whisked back to a familiar scene from home.

“Michelina, will you hand me a wooden spoon?”

“Sure, Auntie.”

My connection to her has made me a part of a legacy of women.
My mother and I stand stirring a sizzling pan of sautéed garlic and onions, with my grandmother and aunt to the side, the sweet, inviting aroma wafting through the room. Michelina: Little Michela. Whenever I hear this nickname, Michela Serrecchia stands resolutely in my mind. My connection to her has made me a part of a legacy of the women who have come before me—something bigger than myself. My name is not merely a way to distinguish me from all the other petite brunettes who roam the earth; it links me to all those who came before me and to those who will come after. It makes my name, like the fells, worth defending.

Mal gestured out over the passing landscape, its reflection glinting in his eyes: “I’ve climbed over 190 of these fells!”

Then a shadow fell over his face. Hollowly, he added, “But since I got myself cancer, it makes me sad to come up here. I can’t climb them anymore.” Abruptly, Mal turned away from me. I hadn’t noticed that he was sick before, but now I could see that his wan hands were shaking and plagued with waves of small tremors.

“I’m so sorry.” I didn’t know what to say.

After a moment, Mal brushed his melancholy aside with a forced smile and changed the subject. He continued to make friendly conversation even after we got off at the last bus stop, and he offered to show our group to our hostel. We strolled through the cobblestone streets, and he excitedly pointed out his favorite fish and chip shop and tossed a few coins to a group of crooning buskers. He seemed very much at home.

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Months later, the study abroad experience is over, and I am immersed in a life far removed from the Lake District. When I now look up at the mountains standing at attention above me, I feel that my mountains, an enduring presence, protect me; when I leave Utah to travel, they are always there waiting when I return. Although Mal may not be able to climb his fells any more, he taught me, a naïve American, how to revere something by paying attention to its name. Sometimes, when I close my eyes, I can still see Mal. I walk with him through the streets and catch him gazing at the looming fells, a constant unfading presence for him, that peek over the rooftops. But eventually we always come to the place where we must part ways. I turn to say goodbye, shake his smooth trembling hand, and just as quickly as we met, he is gone.
What can a Humanities major do?

Humanities Competencies translate to real-world success in your profession and in your life

Communicate Effectively

**Write Critically**
I can adapt my writing to different audiences to inform and persuade.

**Speak Persuasively**
I can shape ideas and experiences to inform or persuade a specific audience.

Synthesize ideas

**Gather Information**
I can locate relevant information when confronting a question or problem.

**Interpret Information**
I can create or tell a story connecting the data to the solution or the problem.

Navigate Cultures

**Cultural Literacy**
I can interact productively with people of diverse cultures and backgrounds.

**Language Proficiency**
I can perform in an acquired language across various professional contexts.
Memories Untold

Clark Goldsberry

At the Market

Clark Goldsberry
In Vienna’s Hofburg palace, I sat before a computer reading the words of the dead. I stared into scans of socialist feminist newspapers. The words of women from Post-WW1 Vienna danced and crackled in old German script. Though graceful, their waltz through my mind was practical. As a part of my internship for the Boltzmann Institute, I copied and pasted endless links to build a website about a turn-of-the-century travel writer, and I gathered articles for a sourcebook on Post-WW1 Vienna. The period I studied, in which a democratic socialist party was elected until a fascist federal government seized power in 1934, was known as Red Vienna. The period’s impact was visible in more than just old newspapers. Red Vienna’s innumerable housing projects dotted the landscape of the city alongside baroque churches, the excavated remains of Roman roads, and crowded tourist traps. I was mired in a literary and physical past. Still, it all felt disturbingly close. I looked over stories of wage disparity, debates about a Christian’s place in socialism, and calls for solidarity between impoverished women across nations. These are words I still see. They dwell on webpages and blog posts rather than crumbled newspaper, sure, but those old words felt alive. My twitter timeline and the political podcasts I listened to echoed them. I walked where the people who had wrote those newspapers walked—even inside the buildings their hands had built. The past was here, before my eyes.

When we look at history, a linear view of it can be alluring. Particularly in Christianity, where we are inclined to think of history as building up to the great catharsis of the Second Coming. However, my experience of history was closer to Walter Benjamin’s description in his essay, On the Concept of History: “History is the object of a construction whose place is fulfilled by the here-and-now.” Benjamin asks us to consider how much of the past is used to justify or contextualize the present. He suggests we think of how many new empires claim to be the reincarnation of Rome. Rather than history leading to now, the now creates history. His essay’s central image is an angel whose back is turned to the future and whose eyes stare out into the past: “Where we see the appearance of a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe, which unceasingly piles rubble on top of rubble and hurls it before his feet.” For Benjamin, history is a great “storm.” It is a massive heap of chaos, impossible to fully sort through or understand, forever misappropriated by those who sort through the rubble. I first encountered Benjamin’s work an ocean away, in a class on globalism. In the class, we used On the Concept of History as a basis for sorting through an increasingly connected modern world. As we studied the fluidity of humanity in a world with smartphones and an increasingly devastating impact humanity has on the environment, Benjamin’s angel kept flying. We picked over the wreckage, but we were still blown to the future like he was.
Vienna itself embodied this idea of historical ruin. Giant concrete towers, built by the Nazis to fend off bombing attacks, stood in the middle of parks or were used as aquariums. I studied Red Vienna in a building built by the Hapsburgs, the monarchy which proceeded any kind of democracy in Austria. The travel writer whose work I copied and pasted was a card-carrying Nazi, whose bigotry was often evident through his demeaning descriptions of cultures outside Germany. My time in Vienna was a continuation of that globalism class. Back home, I had felt helpless before the pressure of a rapidly heating and changing world. In Vienna, I was caught in between a vivid hope for the city's future and the fascist horror that would stamp that future out. Benjamin's angel watched as my life was added to the wreckage.

This experience of history came to a tipping point when my class visited a former Nazi labor camp. Most memorials maintain a certain distance. The war memorials that mark Europe's towns often bear the names of people who died far away. In this labor camp, right next to the gas chambers, is a room with thousands of names carefully lettered across the walls, each one marking the lives lost. There was no distant battlefield or far off shore. Their bodies had fed the ground I walked on. Outside, the walls were concrete and barren. A garden of other memorials, sculptures, and grave-markers marked more blood spilled. I began to make my way to the bottom of an old quarry. The horror of loss tore at me. There had been a bright day, and light danced on our heads through the leaves. It was a sunny day, and light danced on our heads through the leaves. It was a place for living, not for ruling. It was a gorgeous mockery of oppression, defying Vienna's past as much as it remembered it. Like the labor camp, it was a swirling contradiction of oppression, defying Vienna's past as much as it remembered it. Like the labor camp, it was a swirling contradiction of history, but rather than a marker of loss, it was a marker of life. The hands that laid stone and climbed scaffolds to build this place were long gone, but their work remained. The ruins of history are filled with salvation as well as atrocity."

"amount to no more than one drop in a limitless ocean!" He responds to these doubts with only this: "What is any ocean but a multitude of drops?" After the historical chaos of the novel, after a nuclear apocalypse, it begs us to be kind. The urge to do good to others and to rage against injustice was the only thing I felt I could share.

In that spirit, Vienna's rubble of history was more than just darkness. Brightness was evident when we visited the largest of Red Vienna's housing projects: Karl-Marx-Hof. Dr. MacFarland, the teacher of our art and architecture class, took us first to cheap housing built before the democratic party won power. He emphasized its cramped space and lack of privacy. Then we took a tram into Red Vienna's heart. The structure of Karl-Marx-Hof mimicked the Hofburg, a broad courtyard surrounded by steep walls. Rather than the paved stone floor of the palace, Karl-Marx-Hof had a green, verdant yard, with benches to sit on, space to run. Rather than the cold concrete of the labor camps, the walls of the apartments were a warm, bright red. It was a sunny day, and light danced on our heads through the leaves. It was a place for living, not for ruling. It was a gorgeous mockery of oppression, defying Vienna's past as much as it remembered it. Like the labor camp, it was a swirling contradiction of history, but rather than a marker of loss, it was a marker of life. The hands that laid stone and climbed scaffolds to build this place were long gone, but their work remained.

As much as we distance ourselves from its construction, we are always making history, leaving behind the rubble that others will see. It is impossible to know what of our words, deeds, follies, sins, and triumphs will be preserved. The citizens of Vienna could not have known the damage that Nazism would do to them, could not have foreseen the extent of the violence that would be done among them. But they also could not have anticipated Karl-Marx-Hof's preservation, the creation of this source book, or the vision that their work would give me of a kinder, better world. These are small things. Perhaps evil will always feel more powerful than good. But the ruins of history are as filled with salvation as well as atrocity, courage as well as cowardice. We can take both hope and warning in that. Being among history that was both bright and dark made me believe in the drops of water that I would leave behind. All I can do now is remember, be kind, and pray for the rest. There is nothing else.
Twenty-three is such an irascible number. It sits on the cusp of being useful but remains so incredibly prime, only one away from being divisible by something other than itself and the lonely number one: Almost, but not quite. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, twenty-three turned out to be something of a seminal age for me.

It rained my first day in Washington, D.C., making the verdant East Coast city look soft and fluid, like I was stepping into an oil painting. The greens blended into phthalos and emerald hues, and the air smelled like soil and wet pavement. It didn’t feel real, and I walked around the monuments with a disbelieving smile on my face.

Mere months before, I had been sitting in a darkened classroom, listening to Dr. Swensen narrate the drama of American art. In that darkened space, the light of the projector coalesced into images from the past on the flat classroom wall behind the podium. I would sit in the dark surrounded by the other students, absorbing and pondering. From those flat, projected images, we learned about Pueblo culture and early representations of nationalism. We learned about the Hudson River...
We began to see how a painting of a landscape is not just a landscape, but that it has embedded ideas about industrialization and effacement of native peoples. We discussed race, war, and gender and how these are depicted. We looked at the different ways people visually communicated thoughts, ideas, and feelings. By the end of the semester, we thought we had learned how to look and really see. It was during this semester that I applied for and managed to land an internship at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. I was honestly surprised to be selected. I didn’t feel qualified. Regardless, I spent several hundred dollars on a plane ticket, boarded a Boeing 747 in the beginning of June, and left for the nation’s capital. I was in awe my first time stepping off the metro and seeing the American Art Museum. The museum is housed in a beautiful Greek revival-style building, solidly constructed and seemingly timeless. In this new environment, I felt inundated with beauty. All around me I was surrounded with works that, until that point, I had only seen printed out in little CMYK rectangles in textbooks or glowingy projected on white walls in classrooms. I could hear Dr. Swensen’s voice in my head as I passed Homer’s Old Mistress and walked around Power’s Greek Slave, and I realized that a classroom can teach you a lot, but a classroom can only teach you so much. I saw texture and depth and movement, I saw frames and proportions and size. It felt holy to see those works in person. Even with all the factual knowledge I had about those pieces, I still felt like I had overlooked an integral part of their stories—stories I thought I had learned in class, but that was now given the opportunity to fully understand. With this daunting realization working through me, a feeling of youth and inexperience settled over me. My work shortly commenced in the registration department, dealing with the museum’s vast collection of art, a collection that has been growing since the birth of the United States. I began learning how to handle the art in the galleries and how to navigate the expanses of the off-site storage facilities. Every day was filled with new information, new experiences, and new interactions. Every day I rode the metro home thinking about the things I had learned and the things I had accomplished.

I was working with Dave in packing and shipping about one month into the internship. Dave was in his late fifties and had a calming personality. He was getting married to Amber from Conservation at the end of the month and had that happily-engaged glow. He loved his job and was meticulous in his work. Dave had spent the past two weeks patiently teaching me what he had learned over his many years working for the Smithsonian. He had taught me how to soft pack a framed work for short travel, and he now entrusted me with the packing of Edward Hopper’s Cape Cod Morning, a painting worth well over a million dollars. In this painting, a woman leans out a bay window with lime curtains and deep green shutters. Looking past a thick stripe of verdant green trees, she gazes intently at something in the distance. The painting is imbued with the woman’s anticipation of some unknown event that is almost, but not quite, taking place. As I gazed down at it, I couldn’t help but relate to that anticipatory feeling. With a heart beating faster than my confident demeanor revealed, I pulled out a large piece of double-walled cardboard taller than my five foot eight inches and placed it down on the ground in a space I had cleared. After measuring out the size of the box to the nearest sixteenth of an inch, I carefully marked my sizable piece of cardboard with Dave’s enormous rulers, and I constructed a box using a utility knife and cobalt blue packing tape.
Throughout this whole process, Dave sat working on his computer in his office adjacent to the work space. I was struck by his trust in me. I measured a plastic lining before calling Dave over to help me carefully tuck the painting into its new enclosure.

The cardboard fit the frame snugly, cradling the work securely for its journey to a new venue, where it would be carefully unpacked, examined, cleaned, and installed in a new setting with completely new surroundings. And every day new people would look at this work, some appreciatively, seeing the beauty and the emotion, while others would look with dismissive disregard, uninterested and unchanged. To some extent, I could see myself in both reactions; it felt like the difference between learning about art in a classroom and experiencing it in person.

I spent the rest of the summer handling artwork: I housed it; I packed it; I transported it; I filled out loan paperwork and followed up on the safety of artwork currently on exhibition. I met so many new people. I learned their stories. I learned a trade. I absorbed and expanded.

At the end of it all, I packed my suitcase, and I packed myself into a car.

My cousin Stacee, who lived in the D.C. area, drove me to the Ronald Reagan National Airport. I looked out the window, and the beltway was a wall of green. The forest grew within feet of the paved highway, and it loomed high above the cars speeding along its border. Having lived in a desert most of my life, this was a different experience to the sage and pine needle greens I was used to. I began to feel a nostalgia for something I hadn’t left yet. I was twenty-three, and I felt like I’d never seen the color green before.
The streets were unfamiliar to us, but finding our way wouldn’t be a problem. We were tiny specks among a swarm of people migrating to the same place. The anticipatory buzz, complete with shouts and laughter, made it difficult for us to hear one another, so we spoke little as we walked. My friends and I would only be spending two days in this city, and we hoped that tonight’s event would add some excitement to our stay; the enthusiastic crowd had us convinced that it would.

We entered the stadium and located our seats. Camp Nou accommodates just shy of 100,000 people, and judging by the rate at which supporters were flooding in, it seemed there would be no empty seats that night. I saw that almost everybody in attendance was covered in red, yellow, and blue clothing, except for us—I felt a pang of embarrassment realizing that we would stand out among the masses.

After a time, the stadium announcer’s voice began pouring through the speakers. The entire crowd rose to its feet and music began to fill the stadium. As we also stood up, something happened that turned my curiosity to apprehension.

More than half the crowd began to hold up the Estelada. I knew about the Estelada from my studies. The Estelada is a flag with a background of alternating red and yellow horizontal stripes. On one side of the flag is a blue chevron containing a white star. Thousands of images of the Estelada had apparently been distributed to the FC Barcelona supporters joining us at the match. Suddenly, my friends and I were unsure of how to act.

I searched through memories of what I had learned in classrooms more than 5000 miles away, recalling that the history associated with the Estelada began in 1714. In that year, Spain took possession of the Principality of Catalonia (and its crown jewel, Barcelona), and the Catalans have never quite forgiven them. The political unrest surrounding this centuries-old conflict is still present in Spain today. A large contingent of Catalans still clamor for Catalonia’s independence from Spanish government; the Estelada symbolizes this protest.

When we arrived in Catalonia, I had wondered if we would see any evidence of the struggle for independence. Now, at a public and globally televised event, I was confronted with thousands of Esteladas. The independentist movement was made popular in the 1920s when the Catalan State political party was formed. In 1931, a Catalan Republic was proclaimed. Shortly thereafter, the Republic’s leaders accepted an autonomous condition within the Spanish state. Five years later, the Spanish Civil War commenced. When General Francisco Franco came into power, he abolished Catalonia’s autonomy. The Catalan movement was stalled for almost 40 years. Upon Franco’s death and the Spanish transition to democracy in the 1970s, Catalan political forces focused their efforts on regaining autonomy. A renewed Statute of Autonomy was awarded in 1979; the Catalans were still unsatisfied.

The crowd in the football stadium now joined together in singing “El Cant del Barça,” an anthem that was written specifically in support of Barcelona’s football club, but obviously meant much more than that to the Catalan people. They sung so fiercely that they were almost shouting, their faces contorted into an expression that mixed pride, defiance, and fury. They sang with the fervor of the freshly wounded.

Ten years previously, Catalonia’s Statute of Autonomy was expanded to include additional rights—but four years later, the Constitutional Court of Spain ruled that some
of the articles in the 2006 statute were unconstitutional. After this decision, the Catalan movement for independence heated up again, generating public protests and illegal referendums. In one such referendum, more than 80% of Catalan voters expressed a desire for independence. When learning about these events in the classroom, I had imagined Catalan independence as either an underground movement or a general grumbling. What I saw before me that day in Camp Nou looked more like a revolution.

The chorus was almost deafening and was enough to raise goosebumps on my skin. The crowd thundered on, proudly waving the Estelada. The sheer volume — of both the singing and the crowd — made me feel tiny. Since we couldn’t sing along, I feared that we would be viewed as outsiders. I smiled and bobbed my head to the music, trying to signal approval.

The anthem ended somewhat abruptly. The crowd put their flags away and sat down, and the general stadium chatter resumed. After taking a moment to regain my bearings, I realized that the match had begun. As we watched the clubs compete, we began to make conversation with the people around us. The Catalan language was suppressed during Franco’s regime, and was not permitted at public events. Today, Catalans speak Catalan whenever possible; they are also, of course, fluent in Spanish. We spoke to them in Spanish to explain that we were university students undertaking a semester abroad. We were careful to mention that our program covered Spain and Catalonia and Basque Country, as well as Portugal. They sensed our reverence for their culture and spoke to us kindly. My intimidation evaporated. We told our new friends we would root for Barcelona, and soon we were full-fledged members of the Barcelona throng. When Barcelona scored a goal, they patted us on the back and said we brought good luck. When Barcelona scored a second goal, they high-fived us and said we should come to every match. When Barcelona struck again, they hugged us and offered to buy us season tickets.

As we wandered back to our hotel after the match, I began thinking about the city’s achievements. Barcelona was selected to host the 1992 Summer Olympics and multiple global expositions; it is home to UNESCO World Heritage sites and architectural wonders. Barcelona is one of Europe’s leading cities in tourism and cultural influence, and its beloved football club is one of the most powerful sports franchises in the world. We had learned in various classes about the Spanish-Catalonian conflict and we had also learned about the global importance of Barcelona today—but it wasn’t until attending this football match that I was able to connect the two. The wounds of defeat inflicted in 1714 have been reopened many times and have never healed. For centuries, Catalans—consciously or not—have competed with the Spaniards in every possible arena. I understand now why Catalonia’s devotion to its football team echoes the reverence many nations direct towards their militaries.

As I pondered this, walking to our hotel that night, I noticed that the Estelada hung from dozens of windows on every street. Apartment buildings rose high above us into the Barcelona sky and seemingly more than half of the units were displaying the Estelada. I hadn’t noticed the flags on the way to the stadium but now they caught my eye as if they were neon signs against a black backdrop. After attending the football match, I perceived the city and its inhabitants differently. As I walked through the now familiar streets and buildings, I felt as though I could sense the beating heart of Catalonia underneath it all.
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Learning
Through Stories

Alexandra Palmer
Associate Editor

Several semesters ago, I took a class on legend, mythology, and folklore. I wasn’t sure what to expect, but I guessed it would include long lectures on Zeus or Cinderella. That is not what I got. Instead, I was bombarded by factual results of divining rods, by the history of bluegrass, by babysitting horror stories, and by sewing patterns of remote islands—a whirlwind of culture and anthropology and truth-seeking.

Yet, one thing from my expectations carried over throughout the course: it was all story. Charlemagne Rollins says, "Story-telling is the oldest of all the arts. As far back as anyone can remember, people told stories to each other; and as far back as memory goes, people listened to the stories" (164). All folklore, myths, and legends rely on stories—whether they be factual or not—and those stories are critical to understanding a civilization. They expose what we truly worry and care about as a society. Narratives guide our view of history. Stories fuel our imagination and ultimately connect us to others. Stories are the reflection that help us make experiences meaningful. They help us to learn and make sense of life.

One of the pioneers of reflection and learning was John Dewey. Dewey stressed that reflection in learning should not be a passive recall of events, but instead a deliberate, active process. Dewey believed that reflection was critical to make sense of situations, especially those that were puzzling or hard to explain.

Dewey’s theories couple with those of David Kolb to establish the basis of experiential learning. David Kolb published his learning styles model in 1984, from which he developed his learning style inventory. The process begins with a concrete experience, where an individual experiences a new situation or a reinterpretation of existing experience. This experience is followed by reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and

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To Be a Monk

Brinnan Schill, Morning Procession
active experimentation. In other words, individuals internalize what they experienced and then apply what they learned to other areas. Experiential learning, then, isn’t about just giving students a hands-on experience. It’s about giving them an experience and allowing them to reflect on that experience and then share their insights. They need, as the essayist Phillip Lopate calls it, a cul-de-sac of reflection. It isn’t about just meaningful opportunities. It’s about telling the stories of those opportunities. Jay Roberts, a professor at Earlham College and an expert on experiential learning, seconds this idea when he writes, "Teaching is listening. Learning is talking.”

Dr. John Bennion, an associate professor in the English department, leads several classes and studies abroad that focus on this style of experience and reflection learning. For example, Dr. Bennion often leads the British Literature and Landscape study abroad, where students read literature of the UK while backpacking through its countryside. But students don’t just have the experience of trekking through the hills; they are asked to reflect by keeping a two-hundred-page journal and writing essays on their experiences.

Dr. Bennion says, “Being… in the outdoors with students gives them material to write about, but it also gives them a context—a social and cultural context… Learning is done in the social context, not in isolation. We think of writing as this solitary process, and part of it is. But there is this other part…where people are talking about ideas and then writing them down, talking more about those ideas and writings, and articulating them into essays.” Dr. Bennion continues, the
“theory was experience plus reflection equals meaningful experience.”

Another professor in the English department, Dr. Jamin Rowan, reflects, “With my abilities as a literary studies person, I can go out and really listen to stories—identify patterns in those stories, locate key concepts and ideas at the heart of those stories, think critically about the meanings that people give those ideas and concepts. I can ask questions, and question some of the assumptions that people bring to those stories. I found that that was a really, really useful skill to have as a citizen.”

Dr. Rowan is transmitting those skills to his students as he leads them through partnerships with UTA and with Provo City. In the Fall 2018 semester, his students worked with Provo city community development and parks and recreation as well as a citizen advisory committee to develop a Provo River corridor project plan that will eventually be heard by the municipal council and be adopted into the city’s ordinances. Some of Dr. Rowan’s students also work with UTA to take Provo from an auto-centric community to one that can better use public transportation. As Dr. Rowan’s students work on these projects with the community throughout the semester, they are asked to reflect on and write how their skills are made manifest through their work.

Dr. Rowan says, “One of the things that comes up over and over again with my students is communication—both written and oral. The students are realizing how critical it is and how well they can do that because of their skillset, their understanding of narratives. It’s fun to see them realize that in any line of work they have something to add.”

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The value students gain from experiential learning is something professors continue to notice throughout the college. Dr. Rex Nielson, an associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese, adds that, “when students get these opportunities, it makes a difference. These things are not just a theory or academic exercise, but an actual lived experience.” Students studying the language arts in Dr. Nielson’s department have the opportunity to study abroad in Mexico, Spain, Portugal, and Brazil. But while the students are there, the focus is not just on studying the language. Dr. Nielson says, “The goal is cultural immersion and trans-cultural competence, not just to learn a language. We want our students to have the ability to engage with someone from another culture on a deep level, to understand not just the words, but the perspectives, the philosophical traditions, and the value systems producing those words.” As students search out these stories, they gain their own experiences which they can reflect on to create meaningful moments and, eventually, their own stories.
these stories through study abroad, through internships, through research, and through work, they gain their own experiences which they can reflect on to create meaningful moments and, eventually, their own stories.

As instinctive as story-telling may be, some people have begun to question whether we are losing this “oldest of all the arts.” Anne Rutherford, a professional storyteller from Portland, says, “Whatever their age, whatever their circumstance, if it’s a good story and it’s well told we completely have the ability to respond to that. However, what I think we’re losing is the opportunity to be in those situations.” Are we really losing this art? True, we have doused ourselves in immediate information. Yes, we thrive on a hyper-logical system. It’s a given that we rely on a tech-centered day-to-day. Still, we eagerly share our passions and thoughts and insights on blogs. We post snippets of our lives on Instagram and Facebook—and beg for people to follow along. We constantly text, email, Skype, FaceTime, Snapchat, and tag each other in order to connect. We flock to movie theaters, read and write novels and poetry and essays. We conduct research. Isn’t this the foundation of stories? A hope of connecting with others? A need to share our experiences? John Ruskin said, “The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way...To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion,—all in one.” So, as you read these stories—stories of students just trying to figure it out—remember why you’re reading. Remember that it’s our ability to understand and tell stories that helps us learn and connect with others. Stories are the way we internalize what we value.

In this journal, try to see the Spanish streets lined with the Estelada. Feel the Indian one-two, one-two. Climb fells, not mountains, and envision Cape Cod Morning stowed in cardboard. Imagine Grasmere at full moon and come face to face with Red Vienna. Here we had six students experiencing culture and history, battling with insecurities and nuance. We had six students learning and sharing their stories with you.

Sources: bit.ly/Experience-ISP
Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterwards.

—Vernon Law

Learning from experience

Intention
Identify what you intend to gain.

Integration
Connect your classroom learning.

Reflection
Translate the value.