

STUDIES IN
HIGHER EDUCATION

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A ROUTLEDGE SERIES

STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Chapter Two

Dominant Beliefs: Study Abroad Is a Grand Tour

Analysis of policy discourse suggests that underlying clichés characterize study abroad as a leisurely experience pursued by wealthy women who travel to Europe and enroll in academically weak programs in the liberal arts to acquire a general and genial familiarity with a foreign culture. This chapter will conduct an “archaeological dig” into the belief that study abroad is for general and genial purposes of cultural acquisition—or, in other words, that study abroad constitutes a “Grand Tour.” This chapter will seek to uncover perceptions including: What do Americans mean by the “Grand Tour”? How has the term been associated with study abroad in the discourse of the academy? What are the roots of this association? And how has it developed as a dominant belief contributing to an episteme that study abroad is academically weak and without serious and professional purpose, thus helping to marginalize study abroad in American higher education?

AMERICAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE GRAND TOUR

In American educational discourse, study abroad has long been associated with the term “Grand Tour.” The phrase was first used in 1648, in the writing of Richard Lassels, a Catholic priest and traveling tutor of the seventeenth century.¹ The English term derives from the French for “great circuit” and is defined as “a tour of the principal cities and places of Europe, formerly supposed to be necessary to complete the education of young men of position.”²

The tradition of the Grand Tour as an essential ingredient of higher education arose within British upper-class culture during the first half of the eighteenth century. Defining characteristics of a Grand Tour were “a young British male patrician (member of the aristocracy or gentry), a tutor

who accompanies his charge throughout the journey, a fixed itinerary that makes Rome its principal destination, and a lengthy period of absence (2–3 years).³ While the Grand Tour was considered an educational and cultural experience, it often included an element of leisure, even libertinism: “In actual practice, of course, many of these young men merely frittered away their time in the fleshpots of Europe, agreeably cultivating each other’s company.”⁴ The Grand Tour was regarded as an essential part of a young man’s coming of age, and each individual made of it what he might, some cultivating serious international understanding and others pursuing a simple pleasure jaunt.⁵

Americans quickly adopted the tradition of the Grand Tour as part of the educational imperative for up-and-coming young men. In 1815, George Ticknor of Boston confessed a lack of curiosity about travel in his own country but an urgent desire to travel in Europe. Like Ticknor, young American men traveled to Europe, particularly Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, as part of their culminating education.⁶ Visions of Europe steeped the minds of emerging American literati. In the novels of Henry James, Europe became “not so much a real place as a very commodious signifier” of culture and romance.⁷

Many of these same characteristics come into play when the words “Grand Tour” are used among Americans today to describe a European travel experience for college-age youth. The term is used primarily as a derogatory description of international study, loosely connoting the travel experiences of the young and wealthy, intended to broaden their cultural horizons, but often suggesting leisurely, desultory, elitist, unintellectual, and unprofessional aims. These beliefs have been buffeted through political conflicts, as Americans’ post-World War I valuation of European culture evolved into a post-World War II nationalistic suspicion of Eurocentrism.

Through all these years, many study abroad experiences may not have matched the prevailing definition of the Grand Tour, but that has not affected the growing power of this belief to define study abroad. As Foucault argues, in the discursive construction of belief, historical accuracy is irrelevant.⁸ Some wealthy American students have studied abroad; some students have turned their study abroad enrollment into a leisurely, non-productive experience. It can and does happen in human culture, as Foucault has shown, that a set of particulars is generalized into a single notion about all related examples, despite contradictory particulars. When that happens, the resulting generalized idea emerges as belief and obscures the contradictory examples. Such a process has occurred in the evolution of the associations between the Grand Tour tradition and study abroad in the United States.

PERCEPTIONS OF STUDY ABROAD AS A GRAND TOUR

From the colonial era through World War II, when Americans studied abroad, they did so almost exclusively in Europe. "Europe beckons," wrote Asa Briggs and Barbara Burn in their book, *Study Abroad: A European and an American Perspective, Organization and Impact of Study Abroad*, "and it beckons to non-Europeans, particularly, perhaps, Americans."⁹ In the one history of U.S. study abroad that has been written, *Educating American Undergraduates Abroad: The Development of Study Abroad Programs by American Colleges and Universities*, author John E. Bowman notes the cultural associations accruing to the European travel experiences undertaken by American youth. Early travelers included both earnest youth seeking professional training and wealthy young people sent abroad for general cultural edification, yet the image of the latter imprinted a defining character on all in the discourse.¹⁰

"The continental 'grand tour' with which young British gentry capped their formal education a century and more ago before entering public life can be seen as an early prototype of experiential learning abroad," noted Briggs and Burn.¹¹ In 1971 Herbert Maza, at that time with the Institute for American Universities, wrote a book chapter titled "Backlash in Education Abroad" in which he noted that many students, though presumed to be studying abroad, "are actually there on travel programs" and reaping only "superficial knowledge."¹² Craufurd D. Goodwin and Michael Nacht, in *Abroad and Beyond: Patterns in American Overseas Education*, granted the tendency to associate features of this historic precedent with modern study abroad by arguing against it: "A good deal of the skepticism of study abroad is based, we conclude, on a rather careless assumption that it is still simply the grand tour for the well-to-do . . . rather than a valuable, or even vital, feature of higher education. This belief explains symbolic rules in one state university prohibiting use of public funds for foreign travel, or even for transoceanic phone calls!"¹³ Nevertheless, Goodwin and Nacht suggested, some students were attracted to study abroad chiefly because they and their families perceived it would provide a Grand Tour experience. While they no longer expressed this motive outright, the perception nonetheless remained, "lurking in the shadows, especially at the more expensive liberal arts colleges and private universities."¹⁴

Briggs and Burn recognized that the contemporary social context for study abroad was very different from that of the eighteenth century, but they still saw similarities between the Grand Tour two centuries ago and study abroad today. "As far as [this] motivation for mobility, the quest for experience, is concerned, it still guides the travel of tens of thousands of

students—and teachers—from very different backgrounds within the highly organized educational complexes of the twentieth century as much as it guided the travel of scores of young gentlemen during the golden years of the Grand Tour,” they wrote. “It is the economic, political, social and institutional context that has changed, not the motivation itself.”¹⁵

Other modern discourse manifested continuing associations between study abroad and the undirected cultural exploration of the Grand Tour. Archer Brown, former deputy executive director of NAFSA, quoted a report written by two Thai students from the University of Minnesota, saying that “whereas the foreign student comes to the United States in fulfillment of a purpose, the United States student goes abroad in search of one.”¹⁶ In an oral history video interview with the late Lily Von Klemperer, a leader in study abroad development, Tom Roberts, then Butler College’s international programs officer, labeled both pre- and post-World War II study programs as Grand Tour experiences.¹⁷

Some reports within the higher education community, including those calling for change, have criticized study abroad for being a Grand Tour experience. In 1991, prompted by faculty and administrators at Beloit College in Wisconsin, an ad hoc group of liberal arts schools formed the International 50, joined by a common commitment to international education as part of their curricula. In 1992, the group published a report, titled *In the International Interest*,¹⁸ which commented that “Many of the early programs, both at International 50 colleges and elsewhere, were structured ‘like finishing schools’ focusing on the ‘inculcation of cultural attitudes appropriate for a particular class and station.’”¹⁹

The CIEE 1988 report, *Educating for Global Competence: The Report of the Advisory Council for International Educational Exchange*, intimated less than serious motives for study abroad by saying that the American “Junior Year Abroad . . . focused on the European cultural heritage.” While this traditional focus was applicable to liberal arts and humanities students, the CIEE report continued, “now global competence for our citizens requires us to expand study abroad into other areas.”²⁰ When such a report must argue a move away from the dominant belief, then it manifests the existence and influence of that belief.

In his 1989 report for the American Council on Education, Richard Lambert recognized a common opinion that study abroad is frivolous travel, made for personal cultural experience rather than serious academic accomplishments, when he stated that limits were put on students’ international experiences because “study abroad is seen as a diversionary frill, interrupting the flow of the real educational process that is presumed to take place on

campus.”²¹ The popular press still echoes derogatory definitions of study abroad today. Setting the tone for the entire piece, an article in the February 7, 2003, *Wall Street Journal* began like this: “Ashly Hanna recently enjoyed a week in the French Alps, skiing by day and dancing in trendy nightclubs after dark. The best part: It’s included in her semester abroad at Boston College. ‘It felt like a five-star vacation,’ says the 20-year-old junior.”²²

Although the article went on to say that “exotic locales like Cuba and Vietnam are joining the old European standbys,” it emphasized that American colleges and universities are adding cultural entertainment features into their study abroad programs in order to attract more students. “Far from cutting back these days, a surprising number of colleges are taking study-abroad programs to a whole new level of high-end learning,” wrote staff reporter Elizabeth Bernstein. The article included a chart showing six new examples of the “increasing number of colleges” that are “beefing up their overseas-study programs.” The newspaper titled the chart “Grand Tour.”²³ Similar implications about the entertainment and leisure quotient of current study abroad experiences arose in another *Wall Street Journal* article, appearing in the “Personal Journal” section and titled “Sex, Drugs and Junior Year Abroad: Doctors Work to Protect Travelers.”²⁴

In another report Ben Feinberg, a faculty member at Warren Wilson College, wrote an article for the *Chronicle of Higher Education’s* “Point of View” column titled “What Students Don’t Learn Abroad.”²⁵ Criticizing the content of the study abroad experience, Feinberg reported that, rather than discussing the academic challenges of their experience and the insight it provided them, students returning from overseas often discussed their personal growth (sounding, Feinberg said, like heroes of a Nike commercial) or made comments reflecting that they had experienced no change in media-received definitions of overseas locations. He commented on one student:

The responses from Peter, who had spent 10 weeks studying and working on service projects with a group in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho, were representative. When asked what he had learned from his African experience, Peter used the first-person pronoun seven times, eliminating Africans: “I learned that I’m a risk taker, um, that I don’t put up with people’s bull, uh, what else? That I can do anything that I put my mind to. I can do anything I want. You know, it’s just—life is what you make of it.”

Peter didn’t mention that Zimbabweans live in an impoverished dictatorship where 25 percent of the population is HIV positive, and thus they cannot do anything they put their minds to—a lesson he evidently didn’t learn. Instead, like so many other traveling young people, he

claimed to have learned about himself, and talked about group dynamics; students' transgressive behavior, like drinking too much; and bungee jumping at Victoria Falls—rather than southern Africa's cultures or social problems.

Suggesting that students do not report on the academic experience, Feinberg went on to say:

Students like Peter talk about interactions with outsiders only in vague abstractions, while expostulating brilliantly about the nuances of American students' interactions with one another. Even the few individuals who left their peers to engage the outside world explained that move as an individual rejection of the group and still found it easier to discuss their fellow students than the generically defined "friends" they met at bars.²⁶

Reports like this reinforce the conception of study abroad pursued for less than serious purposes.

Influential analyses and popular representations of study abroad continue to echo one another. Over and over, U.S. study abroad has been described as a Grand Tour experience. Each such discursive event further associates travel and cultural acquisition with leisure. Study abroad is portrayed as a personal experience designed not to gain purposeful knowledge so much as to gain social standing and enjoy private pleasure.

Everyone in a community is formed in some way through that community's discourse. Even the opinions and perceptions of study abroad participants can be constrained by dominant beliefs and the resulting episteme. This phenomenon was in evidence in the results of an alumni survey conducted among past participants of the United States's oldest ongoing study abroad program, the Junior Year Abroad program operated by Sweet Briar College. This program originated in 1922, when the University of Delaware began sending students to Paris to study, and was transferred to Sweet Briar after World War II. A wealth of research material is available from this venerated coeducational program.²⁷

When women who had participated in Sweet Briar programs were asked to identify (for the entire group, not for themselves individually) "the primary reason for WOMEN participating in study abroad," 93.2 percent of respondents chose "their cultural interests" first. Participants saw others, if not themselves, to be pursuing cultural interests—an example of the power of the belief to define the experience they imagined others to be having. (For a summary of survey responses to this question, see Appendix, Table 2-1.)

Both men and women were asked, "Why do you think it has been more frequently undergraduate women rather than men from the United

States who have studied abroad?" The largest proportion of both male and female respondents, with only a slightly higher percentage of males, chose as their answer: "Women more frequently than men are interested in understanding and supporting art and culture." (See Appendix, Table 2-2.)

Almost an equal percentage of men and women believed that "Women feel overseas living and study is an important opportunity for self-development and independence which men can usually attain within their U.S. environment." Even when the motivation is identified as "self-development and independence," study abroad can be perceived as a culturally enriching experience more than an academic or professional one.²⁸ A greater percentage of males believed men need to stay in the U.S. to focus on career development, a belief which again can reinforce a view of study abroad as a cultural, not a professional training, experience.

Further, answering a survey question that asked their reasons for going abroad, men and women agreed that they went to Europe to broaden their cultural horizons. While this reason does not confirm a Grand Tour-like motivation for study abroad—and indeed the data in the table shows other motives strongly expressed by many respondents—it may well reinforce the perceptions students have of their peers, if not themselves. These associations are further reinforced by the focus on Europe, both in American culture and in study abroad. (For a summary of the responses to Question 13, see Appendix, Table 2-3.)

Writing in 1940, Gertrude Stein recognized the long-held American adulation of things European within the intellectual community before World War II:

everybody, that is, everybody who writes, is interested in living inside themselves in order to tell what is inside themselves. That is why writers have to have two countries, the one where they belong and the one in which they really live. The second one is romantic, it is separate from themselves, it is not real but it is really there.

The English Victorians were like that about Italy, the early nineteenth-century Americans were like that about Spain, the middle nineteenth-century Americans were like that about England. My generation, the end of the nineteenth-century American generation, was like that about France.²⁹

After World War II, in the academic community, this adulation dissipated, and criticism of Europe as the site for undergraduate study abroad began to emerge. Sometimes criticism of the episteme unintentionally confirms and prolongs it, however. Commenting in 1990, Richard D. Lambert, director of the National Foreign Language Center, cited that in the 1980s, 79 percent of

students going abroad still went to England and Western Europe. "In a world in which the non-European world is playing a greater and greater role in global affairs," wrote Lambert, "our continued fixation on Western Europe is striking."³⁰ The editors of the first edition of NAFSA's *Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators*, published in 1993, expressed similar concern. Decrying the lack of diversity, Hoffa, Pearson, and Slind regretted that the majority of students going abroad chose to study in a relatively small number of Western European countries.³¹

Calling for a change from this prevailing Eurocentrism, the authors of *Educating for Global Competence* argued that to ensure international capability, "Study abroad in developing countries and countries outside the traditional Anglo-European settings should be a matter of high priority."³² The Report of the National Task Force on Undergraduate Education Abroad likewise recommended that more diverse locations be a priority in American undergraduate study abroad.³³ The most recent task force pronounced the same goal.³⁴

The federally funded National Security Education Program Scholarship Fund began funding undergraduate and graduate study in non-Western European locations worldwide, reflecting the commitment of the U.S. government to support new geographical regions for American study.³⁵ In the mid-1990s, the Council on International Educational Exchange surveyed international education administrators at 1,500 schools in the United States, seeking to ascertain the scope and nature of institutional support for study abroad activities.³⁶ The results of that baseline survey described increasing interest in world regions beyond Western Europe, with advisers reporting particular interest in Latin America, Eastern and Central Europe, Southeast Asia and Japan, and Oceania.³⁷

While the higher education community and the federal government have expressly encouraged study abroad in alternative world sites, Europe still predominates. In its most recent survey, the Institute of International Education (IIE) identified that 62.9 percent of all U.S. students studying abroad went to Europe.³⁸ The extent to which reports have called attention to European locations reflects how much this characteristic forms a part of the defining discourse about U.S. study abroad. This persistent concern, while urging a change from the norm, may have also, if unintentionally, reinforced the perception that study abroad is and for a long time has been a European Grand Tour.

THE ROOTS OF THE BELIEF: STUDY ABROAD IS A GRAND TOUR

From policy documents and influential analyses to popular representations, over and over U.S. study abroad has been described as a European Grand Tour pursued by students for personal cultural enrichment, considered insignificant, rather than for any serious academic or professional purposes. To adapt Foucault's archaeological method to learn more about how this dominant belief contributes to the episteme, the first step is to inquire into the discourse field from which the belief emerged, seeking the context within which it developed its power to negatively define study abroad. In this case, it is valuable to recall the historical context in which the pertinent discourse arose, associating American foreign study with the devaluing conception of the European Grand Tour.

Study abroad can be documented as a Western European educational practice since the Middle Ages, and perceptions of it have not always been flattering. In *The Rise of Universities*, Charles Homer Haskins noted students moving from one western European country to another to study and revealed ancient suspicions over the value of such movements: "Nigel 'Wireker' satirises the English students in Paris in the person of an ass, Brunellus—'Daun Burnell' in Chaucer—who studies there seven years without learning a word, braying at the end as at the beginning of his course, and leaving at last with the resolve to become a monk or a bishop."³⁹

Nonetheless, study experiences in other countries have for centuries played an important part in European higher education, adopted as well by students in the earliest years of American higher education, throughout the colonial and post-colonial years. Early American educators and administrators looked to Europe, and particularly to Germany, for models as they shaped all their institutions of higher learning.⁴⁰ "Looking at Europe, they saw what they needed," wrote educational historian Laurence R. Veysey.⁴¹

Early study abroad in the United States was a critical avenue for professional training for young men. Men training for the ministry, for medicine, and for other professions typically traveled to Great Britain, Germany, France, and Austria to study.⁴² Valued as a preprofessional commodity, study abroad was sometimes even necessary for men who wished to assume leadership in early American culture because of the lack of strong professional training opportunities within American institutions in those years.

The interest in study abroad was manifest in the respect Americans held for the German university, especially in the latter half of the nineteenth century. American scholars particularly appreciated the opportunity to go

to Germany to study the sciences in a way that was perceived to be unavailable in the United States.⁴³ Indeed, from the beginning of the eighteenth century until 1914, it is estimated that approximately ten thousand American students studied in Germany alone.⁴⁴ Carol Gruber counted almost nine thousand Americans studying abroad between 1820 and 1920,⁴⁵ drawn by intellectual concerns: "The prestige of the German doctorate was very high, and the degree was relatively easy to acquire. Americans were drawn by the intellectual vitality of nineteenth-century German university scholarship and by the reputation of individual scholars."⁴⁶ By the end of the nineteenth century, a small proportion of those seeking professional training and/or graduate study abroad were women, for whom graduate education was frequently unavailable in the United States.⁴⁷ Before World War I, however, study abroad for Americans remained predominantly a male experience, conducted to gain entry into the professional world.

Late in the nineteenth century, regard for German universities began to decline, and the concomitant opinion developed that American universities were providing adequate, perhaps even better, educations.⁴⁸ Indeed, by the end of that century, Americans perceived their own institutions of higher education as better than many in Europe. Fewer men went overseas to study, preferring professional training at home. The era of male graduate and professional study abroad was at an end in United States history.⁴⁹ Thomas Jefferson had lamented prophetically, one century earlier, that young men traveling overseas came to no good—a regret that led him to found the University of Virginia, the United States' first full-fledged state university, so that young American men could study at home. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Jefferson's vision had materialized, and America's "young men no longer regarded study in Europe as the preferred professional training," according to Bowman.⁵⁰

American men turned to domestic institutions for professional training, and education became accessible to men from across the socioeconomic strata.⁵¹ Wealthier American women carried forward the genteel custom of the Grand Tour. They began to travel in more organized institutional ways. Earlier in the century, young women might have traveled to Europe with families or chaperones, but "By the late nineteenth century," according to John Bowman, "professors at several institutions were conducting groups of young ladies on educational tours in Europe, visiting museums, cathedrals and the like."⁵²

In her book on the history of women and higher education in America, *In the Company of Educated Women*, Barbara Miller Solomon argued that travel overseas for women in the U.S. was early on linked to the idea of

cultural acquisition. In fact, wrote Solomon, study abroad was indeed supported by a wealthy socioeconomic group that disdained formal education for its daughters: "The established eastern elites—Boston Brahmins, Philadelphia Main Liners, and Hudson Valley New Yorkers—preferred to educate daughters privately at home, in boarding school, and through travel abroad." Travel abroad for these wealthy young women took on a distinctive character, due to their socioeconomic status. "New rich millionaires obsessed with making good marriages for their daughters imitated the patterns of the older families, dismissing college as preparation for women who had no option but to be schoolteachers. Both sets of families prepared daughters for a life of leisure, not work."⁵³

So by the onset of World War I, the picture of study abroad in the United States had shifted from that of earlier years. Young men no longer went abroad in great numbers, reflecting their belief that their professional training needs could best be satisfied at American universities. Those who continued to study abroad were the male children of wealthy Americans, able to afford to follow the Grand Tour tradition, or female students, accompanying professors abroad to explore western European culture. In this historical context at the start of World War I, the modern discursive associations about U.S. study abroad began to form.

After World War I, the structure of U.S. study abroad changed radically.⁵⁴ Many young men had seen Europe because of military service during the war. Even after the war ended, many American troops remained in France. As troops demobilized, they had time on their hands. French institutions organized special programs to teach French language and culture, and the "Cours de Civilisation" emerged.

Established by the Sorbonne, the Cours de Civilisation was a set of special courses for foreign students seeking to study about and within another country. It became a model and set important study abroad precedents.⁵⁵ The program allowed study abroad without direct enrollment and integration into the foreign institution. It offered an opportunity for students who might not otherwise gain access to a European university (still the case in the 1920s for many women) or who did not seek to complete a degree abroad. It allowed students to study even without foreign language fluency, since courses were specially taught to non-native speakers. Finally, it accommodated students from educational systems different from those of the host country. In other words, students studying abroad did not have to be at the same academic level or share the same background or skills as their host-country peers. Without a traditional European or American academic structure, without full integration into degree-granting activities, and

without a clear place in an academic sequence, the Sorbonne model contributed to suspicion within the American higher education community. It was perceived as a program designed not to capitalize on the strengths and depths of European education but rather to ease the discomforts of Americans in a foreign culture.

Nonetheless, for many American undergraduates, the Sorbonne model created a new and unique opportunity.⁵⁶ The Cours de Civilisation established a new academic model for students seeking foreign study experience, soon institutionalized as the "Junior Year Abroad." It was adapted to the academic training and language level of an American college undergraduate. Offered by an accredited academic institution, it was designed to award degree credit within the American home institution, not the foreign host institution.⁵⁷ It offered an innovative outlet for some members of the higher education community, while by others it was criticized as a frivolous way to travel abroad. The Sorbonne model marks the inauguration of modern study abroad programs.⁵⁸

In 1923, the first study abroad program modeled on the Sorbonne structure was established at Delaware College (later the University of Delaware). Returning from military service in France with the idea that American students could study abroad in an organized fashion, Professor Raymond Kirkbride founded it. The University of Delaware program, designed to send students to Paris, initially enrolled eight students—all men—although the program was open to women as well. Within two years, the majority of participants were women, a gender mix that remained every year thereafter. (See frontispiece for photographs illustrating the first class, with its all-male membership, and the class ten years later, clearly dominated by women participants.) It was this program, referred to earlier in this chapter, that transferred to Sweet Briar College in 1947.⁵⁹ (See Appendix, Table 2-4, University of Delaware Foreign Study Plan, Paris Program Gender Analysis, 1923-24 to 1939-40.)

In that early era, a small number of other institutions followed this model in their study abroad programs as well. These programs were all established by women's colleges, which meant that, at least initially, enrollment was limited to female students.⁶⁰ Marymount College in New York established a program in Paris in 1924. Smith College established a program in Paris in 1925. In the same year, Rosary College established a program in Fribourg, Switzerland. Before World War II began, Marymount, Smith, and Delaware had established programs in other Western European countries as well.

Smith College helped consolidate the tradition, initiated in the Sorbonne programs, of study abroad as a year-long experience during the third

undergraduate year, a configuration that continues to influence U.S. study abroad programs today. "Smith College pioneered the Junior Year Abroad concept, sending third year undergraduates to study in Paris for an academic year, primarily to strengthen their foreign language proficiency and for cultural immersion," wrote Barbara Burn. Once again, with this practice cultural values were discursively associated with the study abroad experience, building dominant beliefs: "The several junior year programs launched by women's colleges in the 1920's gave to study abroad an image which has clung over the decades, namely that it is primarily a private college phenomenon, is predominantly for women and in humanities fields, and tends to be expensive,"⁶¹ generating doubt about the utility and worth of liberal education pursued in overseas settings.

Rosary College, a Catholic women's college located in River Forest, Illinois, began its study abroad program in 1925. Rosary College women resided and were taught at the Institut des Hautes Études in Fribourg, Switzerland, studying French, literature, religion, philosophy, history, and English. The program was suspended during World War II but revived afterward, through promotional efforts exemplified by a bulletin published by the college in 1947.

The Rosary College bulletin promoted the program in a variety of ways, including offering it as "a way to become better acquainted with Europeans and Old World culture" and to improve foreign language skills. "The aspect of the Foreign Study Plan that perhaps excites the most interest among young women & their parents is the opportunity offered for travel abroad," the bulletin read.⁶² It identified as an equally central mission of the program furthering women's professional careers as teachers. Travel opportunities and serious academic and professional benefits were described together. Nonetheless, the use of the Grand Tour idiom within the discourse articulated with suspicions about the quality and value of study abroad.

Early programs were established in Western Europe. This European focus dominated the discourse about study abroad.⁶³ The majority of programs were initially located in France, and that pattern held until well after World War II. "America was very interested in Europe in the 1920s," wrote Bowman, noting that this early European focus reflected the "dominant role which European art and literature plays in American culture and in the curriculum of American universities."⁶⁴

Subsequent shifts in program locations reflected geopolitical events. Barbara Burn called the Fulbright plan, the post-World War II international exchange initiative, the equivalent of the Marshall Plan in education, broadening American educational vision.⁶⁵ In the 1960s the Peace Corps

brought fuller awareness of developing nations and their issues into the American academic community.⁶⁶ U.S. military training brought men and women into broader contact with diverse foreign languages, expanding American higher education contacts with the Third World.⁶⁷ And since World War II, the trend has been to diversify destinations for U.S. study abroad.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, while the numbers of participants and diversified destinations keep growing, the trend has not eroded the predominantly European focus of study abroad, nor muted the criticisms about that focus.

THE GRAND TOUR IN DISCOURSE ON STUDY ABROAD

Far from being just a cliché, the belief that study abroad is a general and genial Grand Tour undertaken for purposes of cultural acquisition has become a core component of the episteme dismissing study abroad as academically and functionally irrelevant. The primary destination for U.S. study abroad remains Europe, as it has been from early in the nineteenth century when educators looked to the Continent as the parent culture. The two world wars in the twentieth century produced discourse questioning the value of that tradition. The United States gained ascendancy among world powers, sending its sons and daughters to Asian and African as well as European theaters of war. Prevailing educational opinions regarded Europe less and less as the repository of educational wisdom. The United States' education system granted itself world ascendancy at the same time that Americans became more interested in non-European traditions.⁶⁹ The growing disdain for European institutions associated with suspicions about the Sorbonne model and with the conviction that U.S. education had become superior to that available abroad. Males stayed at home for serious education and professional training, while wealthy women, most often from private institutions, it was believed, went abroad for cultural acquisition.

All these factors reinforced the dominant belief that study in Europe, heir to the Grand Tour tradition, was pursued for personal rewards. Gradually, American undergraduate study abroad came to stand apart as an aberration within the male-dominated norms of higher education as they developed in the early twentieth century. Meanwhile, more and more undergraduate women continued to study abroad, forming the majority of American students doing so. It is to those female students—women presumed to have wealth and little professional ambition; women who pursued the twentieth-century American Grand Tour—that this study now turns.