As this Newsletter goes to press, the registration period for Fall 2012 is beginning. I want to make sure everyone is aware of the course choices for International Studies majors in the upcoming semester.

Five separate courses are being offered under the INS program heading. Three of these (INS 1008 Intro to Global Studies; INS 2001 World Cultures through Literature and Film; INS 3003 Senior Seminar) are core requirements. I am pleased to report that for the first time, we are offering two sections of the Senior Seminar, one taught by Prof. Bell and the other by Prof. Swedberg. This will allow our 13 rising seniors to have the benefit of a small class and lots of individual attention.

Two INS courses are offered as electives.

- **Professor Krute’s INS 2050 Environmental Geography** studies the relationship between humans and the environment in a global context. Both popular and relevant, this course counts toward the Global Culture and Global Justice concentrations.

- **Professor Wickert’s INS 2052 Contemporary Wars in Literature and Film** uses the insights of writers and filmmakers to study three important conflicts of the contemporary world: the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Balkan wars of the 90’s, and peasant uprisings in Latin America. This course counts toward the Global Justice concentration.

In addition, there are courses available from many other departments that can be used as electives for International Studies. INS majors are required to take 7 electives, of which 5 must be within one of the designated concentrations (Poli-Econ Relations; Int’l Mgt; Asian Studies; LA Studies; African Studies; European Studies; Global Culture; Global Justice). A complete list of Fall ’12 courses from other departments which may be used as INS electives appears on page 11. Following each course listed, students will find the concentration to which that course applies.

Finally, it will be of interest to many of our students that the History Department recently completed its search for a full-time Middle-Easternist. Dr. David Gutman, whose research specialty is the Ottoman Empire, will be starting at Manhattanville in the Fall and will regularly be teaching courses on the Middle East.

We would like to thank INS Department Assistant **Megan Angley** for her invaluable help in putting this newsletter together!
WHO ARE WE?

The INS Faculty Committee is comprised of:

Gabriele Wickert (Director, German/INS)
George Castellanos (Spanish/ Latin American Studies)
Irene Whelan (History/Irish Studies)
John Carney (Political Science)
Greg Swedberg (History/Latin American Studies)
Robert Derrell, Jim Bryan, David Borker (Econ/Fin/Mgt)
Theresa Kelleher (Asian Studies)
Mohamed Mbodj (History/African Studies)
Binita Mehta (French)
Wil Tyrell (World Religions)
Peter Bell (INS)

Kendra White/ Megan Angley (Student Reps)

[The INS Faculty Committee usually meets once a year to review the program and to address specific concerns. If you have concerns that you would like to bring to the attention of the Committee, please be in contact with one of the student reps listed above or the director. If you wish to retain anonymity, you can also slip a note under Prof. Wickert’s office door (Lib.210)]

Remember: All majors must have an advisor from the International Studies Committee
WHAT HAVE THE FACULTY BEEN UP TO LATELY?

Peter F. Bell, Adjunct, International Studies

Continuing research in Thailand over the winter break, Prof. Bell organized and participated on a panel on "The Situation of Women in Thailand", along with the leader of Empower, a sex workers' rights organization, and the coordinator of the Women's Network Reshaping Thailand. The panel was sponsored by the Bangkok Foreign Correspondants Club of Thailand. Prof. Bell also organized a panel for the Crossing Borders III conference at Bedford Women's Prison in March where four students from the "Gender and Development" class presented their research on forms of global violence against women.

Professor Binita Mehta, Chair of the French Department

Professor Mehta recently presented a paper entitled “Defining Francophone Africa through the Comic Book La vie de Pahé;” It was presented as part of a panel on Defining and Reshaping Francophone Africa through Literature: The Age of Updates at the 43rd Annual Convention of the Northeast Modern Language Association (NEMLA) held in Rochester, New York from March 15-18, 2012. On March 8, 2012, Professor Binita Mehta was also part of a post-screening panel discussion on recent award-winning French Language short films that were screened at the Avon Theater in Stamford, CT.

Ellen Houston, Adjunct, International Studies

Continuing her work at the UN, Prof. Houston served as expert consultant to General Secretary High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability Report on sustainable employment policies for the UN, which was published on January 30, 2012. During “Women’s History Month”, Professor Houston attended the World Women Summit in NYC, held March 9-11, 2012, and she participated on a panel on Gender, Climate Change and Energy Policy for Rural Women at UN Commission on Status of Women (CSW) on March 5, 2012.

Spotlight on the Faculty

This semester we are shining the spotlight on Professor Gregory Swedberg!

Professor Gregory Swedberg holds a Ph.D. degree in Latin American History from Rutgers University and came to Manhattanville in 2007. Since then he has taught a wide range of courses dealing with Mexico, Latin America and the Caribbean. Professor Swedberg has published numerous journal articles within his specialty, as well as presented at various conferences both domestically and abroad. His research often focuses on women in Mexico and in the Mexican Revolution and has resulted in presentations such as “Meat of the Factory to Meat of Pleasure: Gendering Labor in Post-revolutionary Orizaba, 1915-1940”, and more recently, "Adjudicating Morality: Estupro in Veracruz, Mexico, 1925-1950". Professor Swedberg is a popular teacher and a much admired member of the Mahattanville community. Besides being a member of the INS faculty committee, he is also an advisor for INS students, particularly those with a concentration in Latin American Studies. In Fall 2012 Professor Swedberg will be offering two courses that may be taken as electives for the major: Indigenous and Colonial Latin America and The Mexican Revolution. In addition, the INS program is happy to announce that Professor Swedberg will also be teaching a section of the Fall INS Senior Seminar. We’re very excited about this, since it means our rising seniors will receive lots of personal attention in this capstone course for the major!
Study Abroad continues to be one of the most appealing ways for Mville INS majors to combine their global learning with real world experiences.

Julia Casazza—Junior Julia spent the Fall 2011 semester in Barcelona, Spain

Cristal Espejo—Junior Cristal completed a Fall 2011 semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Alina Fisher—Junior Alina also completed a Fall 2011 semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Nicole Mele—Junior Nicole is spending the Spring 2012 semester in Montpellier, France.

Maggie Mai—Junior Maggie is spending the Spring 2012 semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

We also want to wish the best of luck to Valerie Hernandez who has been approved to study abroad in Fall 2012 on a Gender Studies program in Amsterdam.

Our students are also engaged in Other Activities that reflect their independent thinking and their willingness to go above and beyond the normal requirements for the major. Here are some examples:

Meryl Roux has been TAing in Prof. Bell’s Intro to Global Studies class

Julie Hudson has been actively engaged as the Vice-President of the Muslim Student Association

Valerie Hernandez has been serving as the new president of Coalition on Violence Against Women

Alina Fisher is serving as the new president of the Student Activist Coalition

Andreas Argeros has been writing a blog for a popular Greek newspaper

Graduating Seniors

Congratulations to our seniors who will be graduating this semester!

Kendra White
Christa Calbos
Rachel Townsend
Mina Popovic
Ismarie Fernandez
Megan Angley
Several Mville INS majors are involved in internships this semester. We urge all students to do at least one internship as part of their studies. The INS concentration in Global Justice and International Management actually require such an internship, but internships benefit students of all concentrations, helping them to see the application of international studies to concrete, real-life settings, while also benefitting their career opportunities.

Interning with 10x10: Educate Girls, Change the World
By Christa Calbos, ‘12

As a student of International Studies who has long been interested in women’s empowerment and gender studies, it has been exciting and humbling to intern with “10x10: Educate Girls, Change the world.”

10x10 is a feature film and digital social action campaign launched by former ABC News journalists. 10x10’s core message is that educating girls in the developing world will bring about transformational global change. The 10x10 film will tell the story of 10 girls, from 10 countries in the developing world; each story is written by a celebrated female writer from each profiled country. 10x10 leverages NGO partnerships, celebrity champions, global and local policy leaders, and concerned citizens through on-going media engagement, building a grass-roots movement in advance of the release of the 10x10 feature film.

As I was eagerly trolling Idealist.org for internship opportunities last semester, 10x10 caught my eye. I appreciated that they were promoting the importance of girls’ education in developing countries through storytelling. Instead of speaking on behalf of young girls around the world, they are giving them a voice to tell their own stories – share their own unique experiences.

At 10x10 I have been able to share some stories of my own and lend my own voice through blogs. I have loved the creative space that blogging for 10x10 has provided. I am also in charge of 10x10 social media – constantly thinking of how we might reach more individuals through useful tools like facebook and twitter. I have also been able to help organize for various events in which 10x10 and its partners have been involved. One highlight was attending the Women in the World Summit, hosted by Newsweek at Lincoln Center.

Being part of this project has been the ultimate learning experience for me! I have certainly ‘added many tools to my toolkit’ for future work in the non profit/development field and gained invaluable experience.

If you are interested in learning more about 10x10, please visit our website: www.10x10act.org. Also please add us on Facebook and Twitter! As a ‘social media’ intern that would make my day :).
Manhattanville International Studies Newsletter

My Study Abroad Semester in France
By Nicole Mele ‘13

As a college student, you’re expected to understand class material. You’re used to analyzing and making sense of things, and being required to do so. Suddenly immersed in a new culture, however, you will come across things you simply don’t understand, and trying to analyze everything will just give you a headache. What I have found over the course of my semester here in France, is that most of what you take away from studying abroad isn’t learned in the classroom. What studying abroad has taught me is to live with mysteries, and to appreciate the beauty of an unanswered question. By recognizing and accepting myself as the outsider, the visitor, I have allowed myself to gain perspective on an entirely different level and am able to appreciate a culture outside of my own. There are going to be cultural differences no matter where you study, but it is my belief that part of being an International Studies major means having the ability to see past your ethnocentricities (judging another culture solely by the values and standards of one’s own culture) in order to work through cross-cultural barriers and to better understand the world around you. I have gained an undeniable understanding of other cultures and a global perspective that I do not believe I could have achieved without this experience.

Independent Study

International Films
By Megan Angley ‘12

This semester I am taking an independent study course with Professor Wickert called “Contemporary Global Issues Through Film”. For this course, Professor Wickert compiled a list of current films from all over the world that deal with significant socio-political issues of their area, and each week I watch a film and write a short critical reaction to it. The films represent various regions around the world such as Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and the Balkans. I have already seen films about the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, about Egyptian women fighting increased Islamic fundamentalism and about suicide bombers in Palestine. In the course of the next few weeks I will see films about the murder of women in Ciudad Juarez (Mexico), government violence against peasants in Mexico, the aftermath of civil war and rape in Peru, ethnic strife between Serbs, Croats and Muslims and the aftereffects of Serbian war rape in the Balkans.

Overall, this independent study has been very interesting because I have been able to personally experience the culture and current issues of many regions through watching these films. That is the advantage of film: it makes you feel like you are really there. As of now, I believe my favorite film has been the Palestinian film called “Paradise Now”. This film follows two main characters that are chosen to go forth with a suicide bombing mission in Israel. With bombs strapped to their bodies, the two men become separated when trying to cross the Israeli border and they end up spending a majority of the film trying to find one another. Through their journey of finding one another however, they actually end up learning a lot about themselves and begin to reconsider their original beliefs on suicide bombings. This film is just one of the excellent works I have had the opportunity to watch as a result of this Independent Study. Overall, I can truly say that I have enjoyed this course thus far and I recommend it to any other students who are interested in learning more about the world through film.

Study Abroad
Barcelona, the City of Hope

By Ana Carla Costa ‘13

As I prepared to embark on what I was sure would be one of the best experiences of my life I stopped to ask myself the reasons why I had picked Barcelona as my destination. The constant sun and the glimmering beach, I have to admit, were two reasons that I chose this place. I also wanted to go to Spain to perfect my Spanish. Before my trip commenced I had spoken to a few friends that had had the pleasure of studying abroad, and asked them how the experience had affected them. Most of them responded with a certain sadness, explaining that it had been the most memorable experience in their life and they were forever changed by it. This response made me both nervous and excited about the journey I was beginning. Yet, I was also puzzled by their remark that the experience would change me. How would it change me? Would I cease to be the person that boarded the plane in New York? These questions kept my mind very busy for the last few days I spent in America, yet I was open to seeing where the journey would lead me.

After my arrival, I was surprised to find myself easily getting into the “Barcelona” way of life. Within a few days I mastered the public transportation system and was able to navigate the city very well, which allowed me to take in the sights and the people more. The architecture and the Spanish culture made me believe I was living in a movie set, with endless places to explore. There was one thing, however, that started to get on my nerves. On my daily commute on the bus, I was constantly stuck in traffic. Since I was born in a big city, I was accustomed to the hellish burden of city traffic. Yet, by the third week of this occurrence, it really began taking a toll on my appointments and schedule. I began asking my professor and the people on the bus what the reason was for this constant stalled traffic. It was then that I learned that parliamentary elections were happening soon, and the people were going to the streets protesting several things they thought were wrong with the current administration. Finally I began to realize the kind of people that resided in this marvelous city. While tourism would make you believe that Barcelona is a city for party seekers and beach bums, these protests proved something else to me. After this epiphany, I began paying closer attention to the protests and what they were fighting for or against. It seemed to me that the biggest problem the city was facing was the high unemployment rate for young adults. Apparently the unemployment rate for high school and college students was up to 50%, and as a result the students took to the streets demanding a change. There were also many protests about the changes that were being made in the health care system, and about the government wanting to privatize this industry. Never had I seen so many people come together to try to make a change in their government.

As my study abroad experience came to a close I realized that my interests in Mediterranean politics had increased, so much so that I decided to write my senior thesis on this subject. I also came to the conclusion that while I might have come to Spain for a couple of wrong reasons, I left Spain with the right ones in mind. The friends that I had talked to before I went on this trip were right because I have changed. Yet the change that I experienced was one that I am proud of. As I was living in Spain and traveling to neighboring countries in Europe, I learned many things about the different cultures and its people. With all of the economic troubles that the Mediterranean region has suffered in the past years, not only have the people not given up hope for progress, but they are still able to maintain a healthy balance between their private lives and work. That is a change I am proud to say I absorbed from my experience. You have to fight for what you believe in, do the best job you can in your professional endeavors and, above all, maintain your home/private life as a very important part of your daily routine. In America, professional success is what drives most people. In Spain, people are driven by that as well, but their understanding of a balanced life leads them to a healthier and more fulfilling life.
My Study Abroad In Buenos Aires, Argentina

By Alina Fisher ‘13

During my fall 2011 semester I had the amazing opportunity to study abroad in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I spent four months in this beautiful, diverse and unique country, where I learned about its people, culture and traditions. Since I was born and raised in Honduras, my friends wondered why I had chosen to study abroad in a Latin American country. The reason is that I am truly passionate for Latin America and it is part of my Latin American studies concentration to be familiar with the differences between the diverse countries in this area. And indeed, Argentina was completely different from the rest of Latin America that I had come to know. New York was the city on the American continent that received most of the immigrants from all over the world, but the second largest number went to Buenos Aires. Thus Argentineans are somewhat physically and culturally different from other Latin Americans. However, when I arrived in Buenos Aires I was well received, and since I had the advantage of sharing the language and some cultural aspects, I was able to rapidly immerse myself in this country’s lifestyle.

While I was there I took courses focused on Latin American studies at the University of Belgrano. By meeting new people and taking these classes and by learning about the history from an Argentinean point of view, I realized that we are not so different after all. Actually, all Latin America is not so different, but we lack that sense of union. However, with the new Latin American integration in organizations such as MERCOSUR, ALBA, and CELAC, I feel that a sense of unity is rising and this is arguably the key to the development of the continent.

While in Buenos Aires I had the opportunity of staying with a host family that was very welcoming and that introduced me deeper into the Argentinean culture, such as the food and family traditions. I learned that staying with a host family is the best thing to do to be able to really get to know a country. Also, it was a new experience for me to live and study in a big city, where I would take the subway or public bus to the university. This city lifestyle was very appealing to me since it allowed me to get to know many different people. I was also able to go to different cities, places and some of the neighboring countries. A city that stoked my interest was a northern city just four hours away from Buenos Aires named Rosario, which was the birth place of Che Guevara. In this city I encountered a politicized environment focused on this revolutionary hero, manifested through street graffiti and the revolutionary plaza. They also have a museum known as “El museo de la memoria,” which means the memory museum and its theme is to remember the horrible dictatorship of the 1970s and the 30,000 people who died or disappeared in it.

One of the things that shocked me was that Buenos Aires is such a developed city--it has the infrastructure of a big city, with a very efficient transportation system of trains and subways, but Argentina is still considered a third world country. Through the classes I took and from the stories I heard, I learned that in the first half of the 20th century, Argentina was one of the ten richest countries in the world. However, after it adopted neoliberal economic policies in the 90s, the country experienced a major economic crash in 2001 that brought it to its knees. Since then the country has been recovering slowly. In 2003 Nestor Kirchner won the presidency and took Argentina away from neoliberal economic policies, which led to an economic boom. Today, his wife is on her second term as president and the country is still on the rise despite the economic turmoil that is going on worldwide. While I was in Argentina I heard that Cristina Kirchner was invited to the G20 summit in Cannes last November to give a speech on how Argentina got back on its feet after their 2001 financial and debt crisis. I found this fact fascinating, since Argentina is been taken as an example in Europe, while its own countries, such as Greece, are in a deep debt crisis due to their failed economic policies.

This study abroad experience allowed me to become more aware not just about Latin American affairs, but also more globally aware and it gave me the opportunity to meet many exciting people from all over the world. I encourage everyone to go study abroad if they have the opportunity since it is an experience that will definitely change your life.
“Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power in an Interdependent World”

By Kendra White ‘12

Over time, human societies around the globe have established progressively closer contacts. Due to globalization, countries have become more intertwined, increasing the importance of communication and understanding between nations. It is on this basis that I decided to major in International Studies with a concentration in global culture. It is also on this premise that I wished to attend the “International Conference on Cultural Diplomacy and the UN.” Not only was I enthusiastic because of the relevance of the conference to my field of study and interests, I was also looking forward to meeting different people within the field of international relations from around the world. I was also a bit intrigued by the term “soft power,” which evoked sinister images in my mind of propaganda and manipulation; of tricking weaker countries to “want what you want.”

Therefore, when I arrived at the United Nations headquarters on the first day, I was interested to see how the concept of soft power would be approached. The director and founder of the “Institute of Cultural Diplomacy,” Mark Donfried introduced the conference, setting the tone for the next four days. In his opening speech, he emphasized the idea that “soft power” was an evolving concept and that we were moving toward a new school of cultural diplomacy, focused on the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture. The goal, he explained, is to foster national interests, build relationships and enhance socio-cultural understanding. Over the next few days, most of the speakers reinforced the essential role of cultural understanding and tolerance within the field of international relations. Most speakers agreed that culture had too often been disregarded when dealing with international affairs. For instance, Admiral Joyce A. Johnson, the former director of Health and Safety for the U.S. Coast Guard spoke about the importance of culture when dealing with health. She explained that when culture had been ignored, there were often harmful consequences. Paul Eaton, the senior advisor of the National Security Network, and a former United States General spoke about the importance of culture within the army. He argued that some of the cultural gaffs performed by the military had also had terrible effects.

Aside from learning about the evolution of soft power, it was most interesting to observe how diplomats and students of diplomacy interact as a group. For the most part, the participants were respectful towards each other’s opinions and the discussions were fruitful. At the same time, I noticed a clear difference between academics and NGO workers. My general observation was those working in the field often spoke from the heart and with emotion. Although this often made their arguments compelling, it seemed to me that their emotions were frequently taking over, which made them lose focus on the particular issues at hand. On the other hand, academics and policy makers would articulate clear arguments, yet lacked compassion and often lost sight of the human aspect of the issues. I believe this disconnection between the grass roots and “top down” efforts can create problems when searching for solutions within international relations. In the future I believe that work will have to be done to bridge the gap between the two groups.
Barcelona. Barcelona. Even the name sounds magical, exotic, a dream that had been on my mind for years, though I anticipated my semester abroad there with emotions ranging from ecstasy to unmitigated fear. Would my Spanish studies provide me with enough vocabulary to get on the right train, to go to the bank, to find my university in the midst of this vibrant and exciting city? As the time approached for my departure from the Virgin Islands, I packed and unpacked dozens of times, adding and subtracting, trying to be un-American, hoping that I could muster enough high fashion in my wardrobe to become instantly European. Having exited the Barcelona airport, and as I struggled to fit my two overstuffed duffle bags into a cab the size of a coffee table, I knew that I had violated the “pack light” rule. Though I thought I was getting out the correct address in my best Catalan accent, the cab driver met my eyes with a blank gaze and then a series of loud phrases that were indecipherable to me. Motorbikes passed us, honking loudly as we struggled to reach an agreement on the destination and the price. I thought to myself, “Is every day going to be this difficult?”

In some ways, each day was as much of a challenge as the first, but as I gained more confidence and met friends, my world grew with each new accomplishment and my confidence followed suit. These accomplishments included buying peaches by the pound from the neighborhood grocery, opening up a bank account, finding the research files in the library, meeting up with friends from Manhattanville in Italy, riding a camel in Morocco, and understanding the professor for my Spanish Art class who had a thick Russian accent. Every weekend I found myself on a plane, bus or train to explore parts of Europe that I had studied about but never seen. I went to castles, monasteries, museums, clubs, canals, beaches, and mountains.

The semester in Gracia, a small charming suburb in the north of Barcelona, was more than just a semester of college. It was a chance for me to meet the challenges of life on my own. I challenged myself by meeting people from many different countries and was forced to communicate in a new language. I met lifelong friends from all over the world. And I learned that life is beautiful all around the world. As human beings, no matter what race, country, language, status, religion, or age, we have so much more in common than there are differences. And we can all do much more than we think we can. Studying abroad is one of the best decisions I’ve ever made and one that I will remember when I am old and rocking on my porch. If life is made of memories, I lived a lifetime in Barcelona.
### Fall '12 INS courses

**INS 1008:** Intro to Global Studies [2 sections] -- **core requirement**
**INS 2001:** World Cultures through Literature and Film – **core requirement**
**INS 2050:** Environmental Geography -- **elective** [Global Culture/Global Justice]
**INS 2052:** Contemporary Wars in Literature and Film -- **elective** [Global Justice]
**INS 3003:** Senior Seminar [2 sections] -- **core requirement**

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### Fall '12 INS electives from other departments

The elective concentration to which the course applies is indicated in brackets.

An asterisk (*) indicates a 1000 level course. Remember, only one elective can be 1000 level!

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<th>Concentrations</th>
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Greece, who are you?
By Andreas Argeros ‘13

[Andreas, who is Greek-American, recently wrote the following commentary for the Greek daily newspaper *I Kathimerini*]

There is a polemic motif emerging between those who think Greece should keep the Euro, and those who think Greece should abandon it. Each side claims that they are interested in the fight for Greece. The fight for survival. The fight for a future. But what is it exactly that we are fighting for? By fighting for Greece, do we mean to maintain the status quo? Those who say that the people who are looking for a revolution of economic and social philosophy in Greece are ignorant and seeking the downfall of the nation, are guilty of the same ignorance they find in their peers.

It is not a coincidence that this "Greek fatigue" exists in Europe. Greeks are not the victims or the scapegoats of this economic crisis. The Greek state has been mismanaged for decades. Granted, Greeks are just waking up to this themselves, but now is not the time to fight to save Greece, now is the time to fight to change Greece.

That change will only come from an exit from the European Union. Such an exit would be a sobering thing, it would expose the emptiness of the excesses of the past decade that Greeks have partaken in. The fact of the matter is that Greece has been stunted intellectually and economically by its tumultuous past and present. This crisis presents the opportunity for those with the will to change, to lead a revolution of thought.

Where is there serious discussion in Greece on human rights? Where do people talk about social engineering and critique the national character? Where are there people talking about women's rights? Which ministry is analyzing the industrial potential of Greece? There is one place these questions are definitely not being asked, and that is in the universities. Around the world university is a place for the discussion of extreme, not radical, ideas. It is the place where boundaries of thought are pushed. It is from these furnaces of thought that new and progressive ideas are forged. Yet in Greece, most universities house students who were not lucky enough to go to school abroad. They are not on the whole, places where dreams are expanded and ideas created, but places where dreams languish and brains rot. The precarious position Greeks find themselves in, the feeling of uncertainty, they must be the fuel used to begin a new era of societal self-reflection.

Now is the time to scrutinize our national philosophy. Sometimes living to work is necessary. Paying taxes can be good for you. The environment is not something we should take for granted. Women are truly equal to men. Foreign social and economic philosophies are not necessarily detrimental. It takes a mature citizenry to build a healthy national economy, and maturity is not showing self-restraint as your pension is diminished and your wage cut in half. Maturity is leaving the club that is ruining you and taking seriously a matter that has been too long ignored. Greece lacks an intense social discourse that has occurred in most of the world’s leading economies. If Greeks do not even know who they are, if they do not even have any idea of what ideals they wish their state to represent, and if they have no clue as to what direction they should follow towards the future, how can they be expected to build a stable economy?

That is why Greece should leave the Eurozone. Greece is vulnerable now, and those who wish to capitalize on that vulnerability can do so better through the apparatus of the EU. It will take time before Greeks can find themselves and plot their own course anew, and by remaining in the EU we give those who would rather choose our course for us in order to suit their desires a window into the discussion. Greeks must ask themselves and each other who it is that they wish to be, and what they wish to represent as a nation. Where there is no social strength, there is no economic strength.
Colonial rule can be characterized as the non-recognition of existing cultures, the rupture of native ideas, traditions, and beliefs. Africa, in particular, was virtually an entire continent oppressed, undermined, and left out by imperialism. Even when the individual countries were able to reach independence and ultimately attempt to preserve their original cultures, enormous remnants of colonialism still lingered. In its majority, Africans had a loss of identity and were left with a negative self-image. Africans were demoralized as colonial rule drew a wedge between their native experience and an imposed culture.

As African countries gained their independence and transformed into modernity, they faced similar issues: What European values were important to embrace? Which ones were necessary to shed away? Ultimately, the biggest issue was how to become modern yet still maintain African traditions. In this transition, an important struggle was the persistent patriarchy women battled—and still battle—on a daily basis.

Throughout the array of literature and films discussed in the first unit about post-colonial Africa, prominent examples of female characters were featured that not only embodied this journey towards a balance between tradition and modernity but who challenged existing cultural norms. Tambu and Nyasha, for instance, are the two main characters of Nervous Conditions, a novel focused on the psychological and cultural issues that surfaced after the independence of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), that represent opposing struggles. On one hand, Tambu was able to overcome the two main impositions to go to school, money and cultural values, but still had to fight to climb the educational ladder. Education in her case was considered a gift; a gift that came with consequences. On the other hand was her cousin Nyasha who came from a much more privileged background but felt like an outsider in her own culture after years of studying in Europe. Both are in a constant battle to find this balance between fighting female oppression and finding their own voice while still behaving as traditional African young women.

Other examples of female characters who actively attempted to change the status quo in their countries can be seen in the Senegalese film Faat Kiné. At the same time that the title character is the epitome of a confident, independent, modern woman, even her mother, known as Mammy, who is from an older generation, embodied progressive ways of thinking while maintaining defined values. In fact, Mammy was brave enough in her life to fight absolute patriarchal powers and protect her young and pregnant daughter from her husband’s abuse. In the novel Changes: A Love Story, set in Ghana, modern-day issues regarding cars, women’s careers, and divorce are met with traditional colonial struggles such as polygamy and communal families. Female characters Esi, Opokuya, and Fusena each have their own versions of fighting against what they been conditioned to accept.
All in all, looking back in history, a power relationship was established between colonies and their respective European nations. Essentially, colonies were regarded as inferior and, consequently, the colonized populations began to perceive themselves in that undermined manner. Yet, with the process of decolonization and the transition to independence, African men held on to the patriarchal status to assert their power position. Women, in turn, were still left with no power, trapped in societal restrictions, held responsible for sacrificing their lives for men. At the same rate that men did not want to lose power, women began to struggle between African and Western ideals. Their search for a balance between these cultures is intrinsically connected to their search for equal status, for power, for a liberating force. Faat Kiné and Esi actively contribute to this steady race towards equality, towards assertion in society, towards confidence and courage to be who they are despite what their cultures expect them to be.

**Alumn Update**

**Ebi Spahui (’09)** is finishing up her last semester at The New School in Nonprofit Management. She is working on her thesis, which is on *Tradition, Culture and Conflicts with Universal Human Rights*, looking particularly at bridal kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan. She also has been working as a researcher at The Center For New York City Affairs, looking into education policies in public schools and how they affect recent immigrant students and families in low-income areas of NYC.

**Ana Nadal (’10)** is currently in Bologna with John Hopkins University’s SAIS program. She will be interning this summer for JP Morgan Banking Risk in London.

**Valerie Garcia Valdez (’11)** is currently working for Whirlpool Corporation in Benton Falls, Michigan. She is engaged and will be moving to New York this summer before her December wedding, which will be in the Dominican Republic. After the wedding, she and her Spanish husband will permanently move to Madrid. We wish Valerie and her fiancé all the best!
**Adriana Prida (‘10)** is in the Dominican Republic working for Banco del Progreso. Although the bank has afforded her tremendous opportunities, she hopes to get involved in the TV/Film Production scene. (Adriana was a double major in Int’l Studies and Communications.)

**Charlene Cordero-Matos (‘11)** is still working for the non-profit organization Fundación ALAS. She will be traveling to Colombia soon to attend the “Summit of the Americas”. At this summit, Fundación ALAS will be handing out the First Annual ALAS-IBD Award, an award that was created by the Inter-American Development Bank and which recognizes the work of Latin American early childhood educators in four different categories. To learn more check out [www.iadb.org/alasidb](http://www.iadb.org/alasidb)

**Jackie Bourgeois (‘08)** is still working in the Legal and Compliance Division of Morgan Stanley, but has also begun applying to law schools. She recently adopted a kitten from the “Patricia H. Ladew Foundation”, who will soon be getting a little feline sister. We wish her the best of luck with her law school applications and with her feline family!

**Stephen Tripodianakis (‘09)** is now living back in Athens after finishing his TEFL degree in Florence. He plans to begin working as an English teacher and possibly also volunteer for a non-profit. For the immediate future he plans to travel.