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 Modernism and Modern Identity  
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#### Response Paper 10: Final Reflections

“Clarissa had a theory in those days - they had heaps of theories, always theories, as young people have. It was to explain the feeling they had of dissatisfaction; not knowing people; not being known...It was unsatisfactory, they agreed, how little one knew people. But she said, sitting on the bus going up Shaftesbury Avenue, she felt herself everywhere; not 'here, here, here'; and she tapped the back of the seat; but everywhere...So that to know her, or any one, one must seek out the people who completed them; even the places. Odd affinities she had with people she had never spoke to, some women in the street, some man behind a counter - even trees, or barns. It ended in a transcendental theory which, with her horror of death, allowed her to believe, or say that she believed (for all her scepticism), that since our apparitions, the part of us which appears, are so momentary compared with the other, the unseen part of us, which spreads wide, the unseen might survive, be recovered somehow attached to this person or that, or even haunting certain places, after death. Perhaps - perhaps.” (Woolf 148-49)

A familiar phrase for ending a trip to any fabulous locale is “I left my heart in (insert fabulous locale here),” but more to the point that Woolf makes above through Clarissa’s reverie, I feel that I learn something, I grow a little bit, from each place that I visit. Though I do feel as though I left my heart in the lovely 60 degree weather, I feel more like I took a little bit of London and Ireland with me when I left. The knowledge and experience I was fortunate to gain in both of these places have become part of me and, perhaps as Clarissa says, to truly know me, one would have to know what those study abroad experiences gave me and meant to me.

Alternatively, and less long-windedly, as we read on the Oscar Wilde memorial in Dublin, “Nothing worth knowing can be taught.” And that is precisely why we study abroad—to have the experiences and gain the knowledge that we cannot get inside the classroom, no matter how brilliant the faculty or university.

Reflecting on this trip, it seems impossible to pick only one experience for this response. The entire trip was educational and fantastic—the most breathtaking being the daytrip to Howth. As my favorite “strictly” educational experience, however, I would say the evening that Evan, Meredith, and I attended the Joyce lecture at the National Library of Ireland before joining Dr. Sarah Terry and the rest of the students at Mulligan’s, one of the pubs from *Dubliners* that still stands, to discuss our Joyce walking tours rather than trudging through Dublin in the rain any more than we already had. (Besides, the only reason the “Counterparts” characters of *Dubliners* seem to walk anywhere is to get to another pub, so I think we did my walking tour justice.) This particular evening was a favorite of mine, not because it took place at a pub (though it certainly helped to create the proper atmosphere), but because it was a combination of the group and independent study and exploration that we were able to take advantage of on this trip.

I enjoyed traveling and visiting sites with the group and the time we were allowed to explore London and Dublin on our own equally, however one of the most gratifying educational experiences was attending the lecture at the National Library, which we chose to attend independently of the group, and I was thrilled that it turned out to be a great experience. I especially enjoyed hearing from a local professor about one of the most famous Irish authors, James Joyce, and one of the most celebrated events in Irish history, the 1916 Rising, and the connections between the two, then, shortly thereafter, being able to bring the ideas that were unique to the experience the three of us had just had to the group discussion at Mulligan’s.

Having that discussion in a pub where Joyce's characters had sat (and seeing where they had arm wrestled), I felt like we were having a pretty authentic experience, and it was one of the instances where almost the entire group was engaged in a discussion about the literature we had read and the culture we had read about and were now, to some degree, observing and experiencing. It made me aware of how much I really do enjoy those kinds of discussions, when everyone is involved and new ideas can be shared, like the ones that had been explored in the lecture earlier that night. It was also interesting to further put what we had heard at the lecture about Joyce and 1916 in conversation with the rhetoric and history we had been seeing and hearing about the Rising all week.

Had we not had this study abroad opportunity, however, Evan, Meredith, and I would not have had the opportunity to attend a lecture quite like that, or be able, afterwards, to share what we had learned and been challenged to think about with the rest of the students. Of course, that evening is one of countless ways in which "our horizons were broadened," if you will, but in all seriousness, I think we all learned a lot and grew significantly as travelers, thinkers, students, and individuals. Now for one to know and understand us, or for us to know and understand ourselves, we have two weeks' worth of incredible and meaningful experiences that have shaped us to consider. And I consider myself very fortunate to have had them.

Round 1 at Mulligan's:



OGS #15 of 20 overlooking the Liffey at night:



Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. Ed. Mark Hussey. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2005. Print.

I pledge that I have acted honorably. Katherine Carey