The College Year in India Program

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With Survey Responses from Many Program Alumni

2021
Preface

Fifty years ago, on a hot summer day like this one today, I was finishing a ten-week intensive course in first year Hindi. I also was completing a summer orientation program organized by Professor Joseph Elder. The language preparation and orientation program prepared a group of thirty students from around the country for an academic year of study in India through the College Year in India Program (CYIP). I was one of ten students, 3 females and 7 males, who would study at Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi. The summer started me on a path that shaped my life. I met John Grace whom I later married and with whom I would share a life. I started a career that included the study of Ancient South Asia, and then worked to develop and oversee international educational programs for undergraduates.

None of this would have happened had it not been for Joe Elder. Joe was the academic director of the CYIP program, and its heart and soul. He cared for each and every student who participated in the program and strove year after year to improve it. As you will read in many testimonials of students in the following pages, he was a supporter of dreams, but when required could be a firm taskmaster.

Over the years, Joe taught me many valuable lessons. During that 1971 summer orientation, I met with him to discuss my financial situation. I had a part-time job that summer washing test tubes in a lab and wondered how else to economize. I told Joe I was concerned I wouldn’t have the necessary funds to make it through the year. By way of a suggestion, Joe offered a story from his own life. He was the child of missionaries and grew up in Iran. He came to the U.S. for his college education, but with scarce funds. He told me how he would buy canned dog food, and fry it up with an egg. He discovered it tasted to him just like the more expensive corned beef hash.
Joe had a way of putting things into perspective – in this case giving substance to the adage: ‘Where there is a will there is a way.’

Fast forward 25 years or so later. I was an assistant dean at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of International Studies and was responsible then for numerous programs around the world. Joe and I were in India having meetings with officials at Banaras Hindu University. A big reception was organized for us and I was asked to give a speech – in Hindi. I was nervous about speaking before a crowd in Hindi for the first time in many years and puzzled about what to wear since I was billed as representing an American university. Should I wear a sari? Or Western style clothes? Joe gave me practical fashion advice: ‘Since you are the first and likely only foreign female dean whom the university in Varanasi India has seen or is likely to see for the foreseeable future, whatever you wear will become the standard of what a female American dean wears.’ Joe was letting me know - ‘Don’t sweat the small stuff.’ Joe often told people that I had been first his student, then his employee (when I was an onsite coordinator of the CYIP), then one of the many dissertators on whose defense committee he was a member, and then his boss when I worked as a dean. I would reply that no one was ever Joe Elder’s boss. He was a mentor throughout my life. And he and his wife, Joann, became lifelong friends with my husband John and me.

Joe and I followed different paths to become dedicated to the College Year in India Program but both of our paths began serendipitously. In 1951, Joe graduated from Oberlin College. As newlyweds, he and Joann were to go to China as Oberlin College Shanxi representatives, teaching at a local college. However, this was a period of political turmoil in China; anti-Americanism was growing and the college where they were to teach was undergoing
Joe’s academic path was set during this year. After conducting research in north India focusing on the caste system, and writing and defending his dissertation, Joe received a doctorate in sociology from Harvard University. He taught briefly at Oberlin before being offered a tenure-track position at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Henry Hart, an established political science professor, launched the 1961-62 inaugural year of the CYIP. But when issues surfaced that warranted faculty attention, Henry’s campus obligations prevented him from travelling to India. As a junior professor in 1962, Joe was asked to spend his spring break visiting the five students who were in Delhi. Thus, his fifty-three-year association with the CYIP began.

Joe would go on to be the overseeing academic director of the CYIP. In addition, he visited the program regularly; wrote grant proposals annually to support the program; organized a budget; hired overseas staff; recruiting and interviewing each applicant; advised each and every student on their fieldwork projects and tutorials subjects; and provided academic direction and inspiration to the one thousand plus students who would participate in the program over time. On a regular basis, he would be involved in trouble-shooting students’ personal, cultural adjustment, and academic problems, as well as the personnel, administrative, and governmental issues that arose. He called these issues “puzzles to be solved.” Joe also served as the faculty liaison to the UW’s study abroad administrative structure and the South Asian Studies faculty.

In the spring of 1971, I applied to participate in the College Year in India Program. I was an undergraduate majoring in Anthropology and studying Spanish with a goal of learning the dialects necessary to conduct research about the Mayan religion and culture. However, the University of Wisconsin-Madison had no liberal arts program in Mexico or Central America at
that time. A former CYIP participant, Phil Halpenny, who was then a teaching assistant in a cultural anthropology course in which I was enrolled, suggested that I apply to the India program. He advised me that it was good to test out one’s interest in fieldwork before starting graduate school and that time in India would provide good comparative material for any future study. I was accepted into the program, spent a year in Varanasi, and decided that cultural anthropology wasn’t the right field of study for me but that the languages, art, and religion of ancient India were. Along with my husband, John Grace, I became a founding “student monitor,” the title given to graduate students who served as on-site coordinators of the College Year in India program. Through this innovative model of administration, graduate students rather than faculty directors, would go on to manage and help develop the program for thirty plus years. I later became the study abroad director at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Upon his retirement, Joe and I spoke about the student experiences we observed and the staff who served in the program, as well as the administrative puzzles that presented themselves, and the solutions arrived at to solve those puzzles. We experienced the program from many angles and did not want the story of this program to be lost. We hoped that some of the lessons learned, and successes achieved, would be helpful for future programs. And so we decided it was worthwhile to set down a short history of the program. I am proud to have worked with Joe on this project and to finalize it as a show of gratitude to Joe.

Thanks are due to several friends and former colleagues who kindly agreed to read and commented on various drafts. Adam Grotsky, Michael Hinden, Catherine Meschievitz, and Jeanne Vergeront read versions of the text, provided suggestions, raised questions, and offered encouragement while kindly noting that this project was worthwhile when my determination to finish this project lagged. Devon Grams, Mary Rader and John Melvin offered significant
clarifications and insights into their years as student monitors, enriching the picture that emerged
from documents on file. And heartfelt thanks are due to the program alumni who took the time to
answer the surveys that Joe and I sent out. Todd Michelson-Amabelang helped to find a place in
the UW-Madison digital library for this manuscript. The archive department at the UW-Madison
library provided helpful access to its files enabling me to sketch some of the early history and now
have accepted Joe’s files into the UW archives. And the earlier publication I wrote with the support
of the Division of International Studies *I’ll Remember This Trip: Fifty years of Study Abroad at
the University of Wisconsin-Madison* describes the founding and history of International Education
at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and includes a section on the India program based on
documentation found in the UW-Madison archives, Joe Elder’s personal files, my own files and
recollections, and other sources.

Joe Elder and I began this project together as he retired from the University of Wisconsin-
Madison at age 85. We worked for more than a year to outline our ideas, to research different
topics, to develop and send a survey to program alumni, and then to begin writing. As his health
decayed, he passed on his files to me and hoped I would complete the project. I recently presented
him with a printed copy of the manuscript and read this preface to him and Joann. He said it was
a job well done.

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Introduction

The College Year in India Program (CYIP) organized by the University of Wisconsin-Madison was the first formal study abroad program in India developed for American undergraduate students. The following pages tell a story that is partly memoir, part history, and part analysis of a unique study abroad program over the span of fifty-three years. The categories are roughly divided between history including background that led to the establishment of the program, administration including puzzles and contributions that personnel made to the program, and the impact on a representative group of students from their own point of view. Solutions devised by the Wisconsin Program may provide suggestions for those planning study-abroad programs in India or other parts of the world in the future. The real meaning of the CYIP, or any study abroad program, is located in the experience of, and impact on the student participants.

We highlight some of the earliest traces of interest in India and Indian Studies at the University including the visit of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to campus and the beginning of a formal program in Indian Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We rely on what university files were available, including documents written by Professor Henry Hart who first conceived of the idea of sending undergraduate students to study in India for an academic year. For context to this bold idea, at this time travelling to Europe for study was just beginning to take hold in many universities and virtually all undergraduate programs had an American faculty director on site. We outline the administrative structure of the program. We describe puzzles that the program confronted and addressed due to the changing educational environment, as well as political, economic, and social circumstances in both India and the U.S. that had a direct impact on the program.
Since the program’s inception, those in Madison administering Wisconsin's College Year in India Program identified four goals: (1) Offering high-quality in-India educational experiences for undergraduates in US colleges and universities. (2) Providing India-specialized graduate programs in the US and elsewhere with applicants who have already lived in India and studied an Indian language. (3) Generating a pool of India specialists and liberally educated generalists capable of maintaining dialogue between India and the United States. (4) Providing an opportunity for students to see a very different culture directly and develop a sense of responsibility about the high-stakes problems of their lifetime. The three parts of the program, language study, tutorial courses, and a fieldwork project provided the structure to support these goals. This structure was in place from the very first years of the program.

The CYIP was one program, but it existed in several locations, some simultaneously and some sequentially. Over the years the program was located in three distinct language regions: in the Hindi/Urdu speaking area in the cities of Delhi, Varanasi (also referred to as Banaras) and Agra, in the Telugu speaking area in the cities of Hyderabad and Waltair (also referred to as Vizakhapatnam) and in Tamil speaking are in the south-east in the city of Madurai. The program moved as the administrators searched for the most hospitable educational environment that would support language learning.

A large part of our interest was on how students perceived the impact of the program on their lives and what memories they had. To understand the context of the student experience, we read the observations in the reports and correspondence from the student directors and student monitors as well as relying on our own direct recollections. We developed a list of past participants representing attendance at all program sites and during each decade of the program’s existence,
with a balance of female and male students. We attempted to identify individuals who later engaged in a broad range of careers, some directly associated with India or South Asia, others not at all, facing the limitation of those we could track down. We sent a survey with 6 questions to sixty students and received forty-six replies. These replies form the third section of this work. In developing these six questions, we hoped to better understand how students made the decision to participate in the program and how they reflected on the experience. The 6 questions were:

1) How did you hear about the program?

2) What led you to apply?

3) What reflections do you have about your summer orientation?

4) What reflections do you have about your fieldwork project?

5) What were the high/low points of your year (personally: health, advantages/disadvantages of being a foreigner, travel, etc., technologically: communicating with home, banking, computer access, etc., historically: events in India, U.S., elsewhere, academically: next steps, careers?)

6) Looking back on your stay in India and your current worldview, what reflections would you like to share?

In their comments, you will read about their experiences and the impact on their lives. Many expressed gratitude to Joe Elder and to the language instructors and other staff during their term abroad.

We were limited in some cases by the records that were available to us. While we have perused hundreds of files and interviewed staff and administrators whom we were able to contact, we acknowledge that there were many critical actors who are no longer available and yet who played seminal roles in the program’s development.
And we acknowledge that there are still other stories to be told such as that of Virendra Singh, a fieldwork assistant for a period of time and a language instructor par excellence who worked with the program for almost thirty-five years. And the story of Jesudasan Rajasekaran in Madurai who worked with commitment and caring as a fieldwork assistant and then resident coordinator for most of the years of the Madurai program. The names of many others appear in various section that follow. Another volume could be written about the Indian universities that hosted our students and the faculty who helped students with their projects and tutorials. And the ways in which United States Educational Foundation in India and the American Institute of Indian Studies assisted the program at key moments is worth further analysis. Such topics and others await future researchers. In the final analysis, however, our hope is that these pages describe what the College Year in India Program faced and accomplished during its five-decade history.
Section 1. HISTORY

Nehru’s 1949 visit to the University of Wisconsin-Madison

“We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open.” – Jawaharlal Nehru

On November 4, 1949, two years after India achieved independence, India’s first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, stood on a balcony of the Memorial Student Union and greeted a large crowd after delivering an address in the Union theatre inside. Accompanied by a delegation and staff including his daughter Indira Gandhi, a future Prime Minister of India herself, Nehru visited five U.S. cities in three and a half weeks as part of a good will tour: Washington D.C., New York City, Chicago, San Francisco and on the last day, Madison Wisconsin.

The planning for Nehru’s visit to Madison began with University of Wisconsin – Madison faculty member Professor Philo Buck, a senior member of the comparative literature department, suggesting to Vice President Lubeck that President E.B. Fred issue an invitation. In an internal memo to VP Fred on September 9, 1949, Lubeck quoted faculty as describing Nehru as anti-communist, sympathetic toward America, and a fluent English speaker. Philo Buck grew up in India as the son of American missionaries. In the 1920s, while on a Carnegie Foundation trip to India, Buck visited Jawarhalal Nehru’s father, Motilal Nehru, in Allahabad. Motilal Nehru was a leader in the independence movement.

On the heels of a year-long 1948-49 centennial celebration of the University’s creation, it is perhaps not surprising that UW Madison officials felt confident in inviting an early leader of a non-Western country to their campus.

In September 1949, President Fred sent a telegram to the Indian Embassy in Washington D.C. issuing a preliminary invitation, promising that a formal invitation would come from...
Wisconsin Governor Oscar Rennebohm once it seemed the stopover in Madison could be arranged. Why Nehru accepted this invitation, is not clear.

Records do show that the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Engineering was embarking on a program to help develop the engineering educational infrastructure in India. Nehru’s interest in developing India’s medical and agricultural sectors of India, may have encouraged a visit to the land grant University of Wisconsin-Madison with strengths in these areas. Furthermore, fifty Indian students (one of the largest contingents of Indian students at any U.S. university at the time) were studying at Wisconsin, most in engineering. And Nehru’s long-time political colleague, Jaya Prakash Narayan attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural Sciences.

Nehru arrived in Madison around 11:00 pm on November 3 and stayed that night at the Edgewater Hotel according to an article in a student newspaper, The Daily Cardinal, on Nov. 4, 1949. In the little time available on November 4 other than the public appearance, Nehru had chosen to meet with the Indian students and to visit the State General Hospital and seed barn at the University Experimental Farm rather than holding a formal press conference as cited in a telegram dated Oct. 29 from Colonel Nayar, Nehru’s aide.

For the November 4 10:30am union theatre speech, tickets were distributed according to a scheme that shared tickets between university and the public. Two thirds of the tickets were designated for students with enough set aside for all fifty or so Indian students in Madison. The remaining third of the tickets were given to faculty, state legislators, alumni and friends of the university, scholars from other Wisconsin colleges, and members of the press corps.
Emeritus Professor Philo Buck, master of ceremonies for the formal opened the program by introducing a delegation of Indian students who sang the recently designated Indian national anthem, “Jana Gana Mana.”

Oscar Rennebohm, governor of Wisconsin, welcomed Prime Minister Nehru to Wisconsin citing features the new nation of India and the State of Wisconsin shared in common “We [Wisconsin] too are a rural people with a fringe of industry in our larger cities…We too are a heterogeneous people with different mother tongues, religions and cultures.” (Program brochure http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright). Then E. B. Fred, president of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, welcomed Nehru, addressing him as a “scholar, historian publicist, statesman and reformer” according to the event’s program.

Nehru’s formal lecture inside the union theatre was broadcast on Wisconsin Public Radio. Nehru called himself a “student” anxious to learn for the benefit of his country. While acknowledging the ancient history and culture of his nation, he debunked the view that India was rich in spiritual and metaphysical ideas but backwards in technology, science, and modern forms of progress.

He noted that two hundred years of foreign domination took its toll; that Britain, which benefited from the Industrial Revolution, did it with the benefit of India’s “gold, silver and raw materials.” He emphasized the need to alleviate the extreme poverty in which so many Indians lived. And he mused over his leadership style, recognizing he might have ideas, but he needed to persuade others to do the work necessary to actualize them. Following Gandhi’s approach, he spoke of the need to be in touch with the people one represents. Nehru opined that the direction of the world could no longer be determined by a few powerful statesmen but rather by cooperation
from all nations. And finally, he quoted one of Gandhi’s main operating principles: “Means are always as important as the ends.” The edited transcript of Nehru’s speech was 10 pages long.

After Nehru’s formal lecture inside the Memorial Union, he stepped outside on a balcony of the Memorial Union facing Lake Mendota to greet an overflow crowd of students, faculty, staff, and citizens fronted by a cordon of police officers. He then departed by plane for the trip back to India. Nehru was the first world leader to visit the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus.
Creation of a Department of Indian Studies and a Center for South Asia

In the aftermath of World War II and in response to the Cold War, universities in the United States expanded their curricula to include non-European languages and area studies. Given the changing political and economic landscape, universities strove to help the nation prepare students for life in government service and in expanding business ventures, and to address faculty and student interest that grew in part out of the experience of those who had served in the military in World War II. Foundation and federal grants supported this expansion.

Activity at the University of Wisconsin-Madison paralleled this national trend. The intellectual interests of individual faculty increasingly focused on the developing world. Administrative leaders envisioned an expanded curriculum and recognized that outside funding from foundations and government sources could help realize this vision. Such an expansion was necessary to support the rapidly growing student enrollment and interests. These factors led to the creation of the Department of Indian Studies in 1959 and the Center for South Asia in 1960.

Faculty

In the late nineteen-forties, scholars who had served in the military joined or rejoined the faculty. At the same time, with the help of the GI bill, many returning soldiers became students. Given their experience, there was an interest in a world beyond the borders of the United States. Several faculty who joined the campus had a keen interest in India.

In 1947, Murray Fowler joined the University of Wisconsin - Madison faculty as a lecturer in comparative philology. Born in Cape Town, South Africa on March 13, 1905, he became a U.S. citizen in 1929. He studied and taught at various U.S. institutions of higher learning between 1924 and 1934. He then studied Germanic linguistics for a year at the University of Vienna. Returning
to the U.S., he taught for two years at Purdue before attending Harvard where he earned the M.A. degree in 1938 and the Ph.D. in comparative philology in 1940. During 1940-41, he was stationed at the U.S. Naval Academy. In 1941-42, he was the A.C.L.S. Fellow in Sanskrit. During World War II, he worked on the German desk at the Office of Navy Intelligence as well as serving in other posts.

In 1948, he was named associate professor and chairman of the Department of Linguistics. In 1953, he was named full professor. In the fall of that year, he taught both elementary and Vedic Sanskrit and in 1952-53, he was a Fulbright research scholar in India. Fowler would go on to chair a faculty committee organizing the Indian Studies Program on campus. In addition to teaching courses including Indian Classics in Translation between 1953-56, his vision was central to the creation of a Department of Indian Studies in 1959.

Henry Hart spent his early years in Lucknow India, where his father was the YMCA secretary. The family returned home to Tennessee, where Henry graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1936. After graduation, he took an administrative position with the Tennessee Valley Authority, a project that provided access to electricity for many low-income families. He served in the Army in World War II. Upon his return to the U.S., Henry embarked on graduate study at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Political Science. In 1948, breaking its long tradition of not hiring its own graduates, the department hired Henry as a lecturer. After completing his dissertation, he was appointed an assistant professor of Political Science in 1950, associate professor in 1955 and Professor in 1959. His academic research had focused on regional planning and river valley management with a focus on American river systems. He developed an interest in comparative analysis and was exploring the possibility of a research project in Columbia, but the river valley authority was not sufficiently developed there. While Hart had spent his childhood in
India, he had not pursued any academic agenda there. However, in the course of pursuing a post–dissertation research project, and with the promise of funding from the Ford Foundation and a Fulbright teaching grant, he turned his interest to the rivers of India. His 1952 year in India resulted in a book, New India’s Rivers published in 1956, established him as a scholar on the India’s subcontinent within his discipline for the remainder of his career.

He spoke about weekly meetings in the mid-1950s on the Madison campus that drew faculty from across campus to discuss ways to enlarge and support the growing constituency of faculty with an interest in India. In 1958, he was one of the faculty lecturers in a newly created course titled Modern Civilization of India.

In 1958-59, he was in Poona as a Fulbright lecturer and researcher. While there, he met with a visitor from the Rockefeller Foundation Chadbourn Gilpartick, about the need for more education about India in U.S. universities, and in 1959, on his trip home, Hart stopped in Berkeley and learned that an appropriation had been made to form Asian language centers focusing on graduate students in U.S. universities. Once funding was secured, he became the first director of the Center for South Asia in 1960.

While Fowler and Hart were critical to the development of the department and center, other faculty across campus also focused on and/or supported the development of Indian Studies on campus. In the early 1950s, Guy Fowlkes, Education, consulted with the Indian Government on the development of higher education. Engineering faculty under the leadership of Dean Kurt Wendt engaged in a project to train engineering faculty and to build engineering education in India. And in the last years of the 1950s-decade, Joseph Elder was recruited to join the Sociology Department, Gerald Kelley was hired to teach Telugu and Braj Machwe to teach Hindi. Kelly
travelled with Hart to Washington D.C. in an effort to secure funding for a Center that would teach languages.

Institutional Growth and Development

Student enrollment at the University of Wisconsin-Madison more than doubled between 1945 and 1946 as veterans used their GI bill benefits. During the tenures of Presidents E.B. Fred (1945-1958) and Conrad Elvehjem (1958-1962), significant development in the field of internationalization occurred. Fred Harvey Harrington, who would later become a president of the university, was an assistant for academic affairs to President Elvehjem and did much to support the expansion of international education. These leaders recognized the need for outside foundation and federal funding to expand international programs, and all contributed their growth. Fred, for example, recognized that Harvard was expanding a focus on China and Japan with outside funding and saw a window of opportunity in building the area of Indian Studies. Elvehjem gave Harrington the scope to expand international education. And Harrington strategized on securing necessary funding from foundations and new federal programs.

National Concerns and Funding

In the cold war atmosphere of the 1950s, the U.S. and Russia engaged in a competition for spheres of influence in the developing world. An educated citizenry within which experts could be drawn to government work, was considered key. The launching of Sputnik in 1957 only accelerated the U.S. governmental concern in staying ahead rather than falling behind Russia in influence as well as technology. The Fulbright Program, signed into law in 1946, created a structure to support US scholars and students abroad. In India, PL-480 funds. derived from wheat sales to India for Indian currency in mid-1950s, built a large surplus of Indian Rupees in U.S. coffers. Besides supporting activities of the diplomatic core in India, these funds became available to support U.S. scholars,
researchers, and students in India. Fowler and Hart’s research and teaching in India in the 1950, as well as that of future faculty benefitted from these funds.

The National Education Defense Act, passed in 1958, supported the creation of Language and Area Studies Centers in U.S. universities, including the Center for South Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1960.

The Vision of Foundations and Support for Higher Education

Ford Foundation funds helped support a training program for Indians conducted by the College of Engineering. The Rockefeller Foundation gave the University of Wisconsin-Madison $46,750 in November 1958 to fund four years of training in South Asian Languages beginning in January 1959. With these funds in hand, the Department of Indian Studies was formed in the Fall of 1959. A new undergraduate major leading to a B.A. as well as a full roster of graduate and undergraduate courses began that same fall. A Center for South Asia was established in 1960 with the additional funding from a National Defense Education Act (NDEA) grant. The new Department and the Center built the infrastructure of Indian Studies on campus.

Establishment of the Department of Indian Studies and the Center for South Asia. A five-year Ford Foundation Grant of $1.2 million was secured in 1962, and Indian Studies was well on its way to becoming an established component of the curriculum and a research focus of faculty.

In a taped interview upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor A.K. Narain and in a memo to Joseph Elder in 2014, Henry Hart recollected the circumstances and the rationale for developing the Department of Indian Studies and the Center for South Asia. Referring to faculty development, research and teaching activities in India, he wrote: “American academics were now [starting in the 1950s], going to go out to India for a variety of purposes in great numbers, thanks to Public Law 480 funds. Few of them would have the language skills they needed. There were
two kinds of answers. One was a sort of first aid approach. This could be accomplished by providing intensive and linguistically efficient language training at several universities in the United States stressing intensive summer courses in as many Indian languages as possible, and in addition probably at least two linguistic centers in India one for the North India languages and the other for Dravidian. But from a wider perspective this was inefficient. It assumed that graduate students at the peak of their professional training would interrupt that training for at least a year to get the language proficiency required.

“Much better it seemed to me would be to cast the net much wider in undergraduate education. That is to draw a larger number of undergraduates into the study of India including not only courses on India in the various disciplines but courses like the Civilization of India courses already starting at a number of universities. Foreign language instruction is of course much more efficient the earlier in the student’s’ career it is introduced. My idea was to develop a very much larger pool of students who became interested in India as early as possible in their undergraduate experience, who got started in one or more Indian languages as undergraduates, who got a much better command of the language and who didn’t have to interrupt their higher graduate education to do elementary learning. Such a strategy would also of course increase the total number of graduate students doing fruitful research on Indian topics.”

Hart furthermore pointed out that Fowler believed that having a department of Indian Studies, with faculty lines, would create a viable structure for organizing this work. And he noted Fred Harvey Harrington’s contribution to the development of area studies. According to Hart, Harrington was “…showing that he could develop new programs in the social sciences that would be paid for by funds available from outside [the] university.” Hart wrote: “I happened to be in his office in Bascom Hall when I heard him challenge an officer of either the Rockefeller or Carnegie
Foundation for restricting grants [to] private universities.” Hart remembered Harrington arguing that public as well as private universities deserved foundation support in order to grow the field of international and area studies. Harrington argued that there was no reason to presume that state taxpayers should fund this new field of study given the field’s application to national interests. Hart further remembered that “He [Harrington] prevailed. The foundations opened up their grants to state institutions across the country.” And together with support from the Ford, Rockefeller, and Carnegie Foundations, area and third world language studies began to flourish.
College Year in India Program (CYIP) – The Formative Years

In 1960 Professor Henry Hart of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Political Science Department helped Tom Trautmann, a junior in Beloit College, spend his 1960-61 academic year in India as a “casual student” affiliated with the Delhi School of Economics. Tom Trautmann described his year in India in glowing terms. He returned to receive his BA from Beloit College in 1962. Encouraged by Trautmann's experience, Henry Hart requested funds from the Carnegie Corporation for U.S. undergraduates to study in India. Carnegie's positive response enabled Henry Hart to arrange for five students from Wisconsin who had just earned their Bachelor of Arts degrees (from Beloit College, Lawrence University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison) to spend the 1961-62 academic year as “casual-students” in the Delhi School of Social Work under the supervision of the Principal, Dr. Ranade. The 1961-62 academic year marks the beginning of Wisconsin's College Year in India Program. Funds for the program came through the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Wisconsin faculty were responsible for the well-being of the students in India.

During the 1962 Spring break, Joe Elder, a new Assistant Professor in the Departments of Sociology and Indian Studies, flew to India to hear the five students' reports of their year. The reports Joe brought back led Henry Hart to contact the Carnegie Corporation again, and the Corporation provided additional funding for U.S. undergraduates to study in India.

During the summer of 1962 sixteen undergraduates from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and several colleges of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest studied Hindi in Madison with Professor Ripley Moore. In order to expand the opportunities for students, study sites were expanded to three institutions in two cities. Some students travelled to Delhi to study at Delhi University's School of Social Work (in Old Delhi), others to Jamia Millia Islamia (in New Delhi).
Old Delhi was the former seat of the great Mughal empire and the Madison faculty had connections with faculty in the School of Social Work. Jamia Millia Islamia in New Delhi, the seat of the British colonial empire and the seat of government for independent India, offered access to research in rural areas and a different set of scholars who could advise students. Other students travelled to Banaras Hindu University (BHU) located in Varanasi, a city that was the spiritual capital of India and drew Hindu pilgrims from throughout the country. The BHU curriculum had a strong Indology and arts curriculum. Dr. A.K. Narain of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) faculty played a major part in establishing the program in Varanasi. At all three sites students were expected to continue their language training, attend classes, and write a report based on some kind of fieldwork. Joe Elder, who was conducting research in Lucknow that year with a fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies, served as faculty coordinator for the three-location-program. At the end of the academic year students' fieldwork reports were collected to be filed on the UW-Madison campus.

The 1963-64 academic year saw the College Year in India Program (CYIP) open its admissions to students from any accredited college or university in the United States or Canada. 1963-64 also saw the addition of a Telugu campus at Osmania University in Hyderabad, with Dr. Bh. Krishnamurti of the Linguistics Department playing a major role. Telugu, a Dravidian language, was relatively unknown in the U.S. so this location was thought to expand and deepen understanding of the regions of India. By now the University of Wisconsin-Madison insisted that an American professor live in India as Program Director. Professor Russell Langworthy of Carleton College, supervising the start of the Telugu campus in Hyderabad, became the first American professor to live in India as Program Director, with Henry Hart helping from his location that year in Delhi. In the Spring of 1964 Dr. Robert Holmes, a former Congregational missionary
in Sri Lanka, was hired as Director of the College Year in India Program. He visited the students studying Hindi and Telugu in Berkeley that summer, then flew to Delhi, where he rented a flat at 1B Flagstaff Road adjoining the Delhi University campus in Old Delhi. For the next eight years five American professors chosen for their prior administrative and in-India experiences lived with their families at 1-B Flagstaff Road, from where they supervised the program on three campuses. In Madison in 1964 Joe Elder formally became the Faculty Coordinator for the College Year in India Program within the Division of International Studies and Programs.

In India during the 1968-69 academic year student strikes regarding a separate Telugu-speaking state of Telangana effectively closed Osmania University. With the help of Dr. Robert Holmes, now Director of the Fulbright program in Delhi, and Estelle Strizhak, an undergraduate on the Program in 1964-65, the University of Wisconsin-Madison authorities moved the Telugu campus from Osmania University in Hyderabad to Andhra University in Waltair, a section of the seacoast city of Vizakhapatnam (Vizag). Dr. Ramakrishna Rao of the Psychology Department oversaw the new program. Andhra University's Telugu Department appointed an exceptionally talented graduate student, V. Narayana Rao, to teach Telugu to the Wisconsin students. Another exceptional Waltair teacher was Professor J. Prabhakar Sastry, who taught Sanskrit to the Wisconsin students. Within a few years V. Narayana Rao had joined the South Asia faculty on the UW-Madison campus. Decades later Professor Sastry lived in Madison, where he wrote his two-volume Sanskrit grammar Joeelderiyalaghupadaparijata. In the United States, Office of Education funding for summer South Asia language instruction rotated between Berkeley, Chicago, Urbana, East Lansing, Minneapolis, Ann Arbor, and Madison.

Who were the students who were drawn to the program in India? Some had an interest in an international career or wanted to understand the culture of India for scholarly reasons. In
addition, there was a growing student awareness about India. University courses focused on India increased with the help of federal dollars. And popular culture drew attention to the country as well. Folk music icons travelled to India. One program student recalled: “I vividly remember Pete Seger singing Puff the Magic Dragon at Triveni Auditoriums” [in New Delhi]. The counterculture movement developed in the U.S. with many young Americans, part of the hippy generation, travelling beyond Europe to other places around the world. India was an inexpensive country within which to travel, English was widespread if not universally spoken, its mystical religious traditions were gaining popularity and mind-altering drugs were cheap and readily available. In 1965, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada arrived in Boston as a proponent of what became known in the west as the Hari Krishna movement. Students were also aware of cultural leaders who had an interest in India: “Alan Ginsberg [the beat generation and counterculture writer and philosopher] recently had left Banaras, and the Beatles had not yet arrived.” (1964-65 Varanasi participant). Shortly after the Beatles did arrive. The famous rock band members had met Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the founder of Transcendental Meditation in London in 1967. Their ravel to Rishikesh to attend a Transcendental Meditation training course at this ashram in February 1968 gave further visibility to India.

During this formative period, students also observed national events of the period in India. The Indo-Pak War in 1965-66 began in September as students arrived to night-time blackouts in Delhi, Prime Minister Shastri died in January 1966, with the attendant state events. In 1966, famine conditions intensified in large parts of India during March and April. In 1971-72, the Bangladesh war ensued with students in Delhi and Varanasi blackening windows in the night-time as military planes flew overhead. While some students more than others were attuned to the implications of these events, they offered opportunities to see various dimensions of India up-close.
The eleven academic years between 1961-72 were the formative period of the CYIP program when program growth and leadership structure evolved. Funding from the Carnegie Foundation for the first three years offset the student fees for the program significantly. In fact, all expenses other than tuition to their home university were covered. For the remainder of this period, funding from the U.S. Office of Education through the PL480 program helped keep the program affordable.

The CYIP sites developed from one in Delhi to three locations: one each in Delhi, Varanasi, and Hyderabad (moving to Waltair in 1969). The different cultural, fieldwork, and linguistic environments of these different sites motivated the expansion. A Wisconsin based faculty coordinator communicated with the on-site leadership which had developed into a system of an American faculty supervisor based in Delhi, a graduate assistant at one of the sites, and Indian faculty directors at each site. The academic program maintained its basic structure of language learning, university courses and a fieldwork project with an expansion from a largely social science focus to include the humanities as well. During this period, various student concerns were addressed both in a developing pre-departure orientation program and with on-site administration. These concerns included group dynamics, health maintenance, and coping with cultural differences. By 1972, the CYIP was nationally known and attracted a large enough pool of applicants to form a cohort of approximately thirty students who participated in the India program each year. By observing the experiences and considering the feedback from each group of students, the on-site leadership and staff and the Madison based administration sought to improve the program and address the puzzles presented by the attempt to assimilate American undergraduates into the academic and cultural world of India.

Robert Holmes recorded in detailed correspondence and reports on the challenges faced in
the first three years of the program as well on the subsequent three years that he served as the
director. He also wrote a Handbook students received upon arrival and a lengthy article published
in the Illustrated Weekly, a newspaper publication in India. His writings are the source of much
of the information about the program in the early and middle years of this formative period.

The summer session, 12 weeks long during that period, included language instruction, as
well as weekly lectures by scholars. Students also audited a course focused on India. And there
were meetings on the cultural and everyday experience in India that increased as the understanding
of students needs became apparent. Beginning in 1964, these included role playing about social
situations led by Joe Elder, a lecture on everyday life by the American faculty member in residence
the previous year, sessions with previous participants, and in some cases, meetings led by the
incoming director on thorny topics. These included tension between students from different types
of universities and colleges as well as issues specifically related to the upcoming India experience.
As the years progressed, students were given handouts on more and more topics each year.

After his first year as director, Holmes created a Handbook that the CYIP participants
received upon arrival in India. The handbook provided a roadmap for the students on how to
navigate the year in India. It opened with a Welcome! that congratulated the students for their hard
work during the summer, pointed out that being in India offered unique language improvement
possibilities, and in a light-hearted manner, acknowledged the weather in the first weeks could be
‘ghastly.’ The remainder was filled with specific information to assist with every-day living and
academic success while in India as well as detailed information about the end of the year and the
mechanics of post program travel.

The ‘Ten Commandments’ of the handbook on page 22, all in Capital letters for emphasis,
illustrated the administration’s hope that the students would create a good impression of young
Americans as well behaved, engaged scholars while in India:

“SPEND AN HOUR A DAY ON LANGUAGE STUDY EVERYDAY (more when assignments demand)

SEE YOUR PROJECT ADVISOR REGULARLY (Twice a month first semester; weekly, second)

SPEAK HINDI OR TELUGU

EXPLAIN ABSENSES TO YOUR TEACHER PROMPTLY

PRESERVE AN AIR OF GENIAL GOOD HUMOR

ACCEPT, ACCEPT, ACCEPT

DON’T COMPARE

DATE IN GROUPS

WRITE HOME EVERY WEEK”

Arrival Information - Arrival details covered information about the identity of local program directors and their availability to assist the students with their academic and personal success during the year. Directions included registering with police, the location of tailors for clothing, caring for the program bicycles issued to each student, and the importance of personal appearance (“You’re not a credit to the Wisconsin Program if you travel around India looking untidy and beatnikish.”) Specific details like how many inches a sari should be from the ground were also included (2) and the easiest fabric to wrap (georgette.)

Everyday Life - Advice about good behavior was clear. Students were reminded about eating and housekeeping matters: “…when your teacher (male or female) enters your presence anywhere, stand up.” “Don’t touch the serving spoon or fork to your own plate.” “Don’t discuss your alimentary canal and alimentary ailments around the table.” And to those living in hostels, which included most of the students in the mid-sixties, “Keep your room neat.” The handbook
states the expectations of the program, implying that the expectations were not necessarily met in the preceding years: “We expect you to continue to be...under the rules of the hostel, under the rules of the university, and under the rules of your conscience and common decency.” p. 4. “Don’t bite on the sucker-bait that you can do things secretly. There are few secrets in India, fewer in a hostel, and a foreign student will get by in breaking rules and coming in after-hours about as slickly as an elephant coming through canebrake.” p.5

Matters included the pros and cons of living with an Indian family, lost privacy, awkwardness from lack of familiarity with American College students, isolation from college-aged students etc. Students were encouraged to remain in the hostels and get involved in the mess committee, checking on the water-boiling process etc. And smoking was discouraged – especially for women.

Other information focused on everyday practicalities. Information about sending and receiving parcels noted that they “…must be sewed up in cloth and then sealed with sealing wax.” There is a description of how duty will have to be paid on durable goods such as typewriters, tape recorders or cameras if these objects do not leave the country with the student at the end of the year.

Health - During the first three years, ill health was a major and somewhat unexpected problem. In his 1964-65 report, Holmes notes that the problems were so severe in the previous years that academic performance suffered. He further observed that Fulbright and American Institute of Indian Studies scholars were having the same health challenges as the CYIP students. In fact, Holmes suggests that “…the American Embassy should seriously consider providing a consulting physician, highly trained in tropical diseases, who could make a circuit of the major universities in India in November and January…” While this proposal was not realized,
the program built an infrastructure of information and support that did improve the health status of most students.

The students lived in dormitories and a few with families. Among the illnesses reported were gastric upsets of mild to serious intensity as well as tropical diseases including cholera, malaria, typhoid, typhus, hepatitis etc. Once written, the handbook consolidated helpful information including contact information for a specific doctor at each site (Dr. K. K. Sharma in Hyderabad, Dr. A.K. Seth in Varanasi, and Dr. Dorothy Chacko in Delhi). Students were given a medical kit upon arrival and were informed of the reimbursement process for any medications that the student might need in the course of the year. The program provided Gamma globulin (hepatitis preventative) for a mid-year booster and reminded students that they needed a mid-year cholera booster shot; and these needed to be recorded in their yellow immunization book to facilitate entry to other countries on their way home and the U.S. By the mid-sixties, health remained an issue of concern but perhaps became more manageable as a result of more thorough pre-departure orientations covering hygiene, health in preparation and then the handbook information upon arrival.

Food and drinking water safety were further enhanced in Holmes’ second year as director. A program house was secured at each site in which two communal meals were prepared for the students in the program. However, keeping in good health needed constant vigilance by the students themselves as well as by the program administration.

**Acade**mics - The handbook contains information meant to ensure academic success. There is a section about appropriate academic behavior in India (stand when a professor walks into the room, do not cut classes, politely explain any absences), as well as advice on how to be a successful independent learner. It recognizes that American students were accustomed to regular feedback
provided by semester courses with papers and exams. Moreover, sceptics were saying “Undergraduates are too immature for a program” such as the CYIP wherein undergraduates conduct fieldwork and need to take initiative without course outlines, etc. The handbook acknowledges that a year of somewhat independent learning is a challenge for undergraduates and encourages a mature attitude – “What is maturity? Important ingredients are *responsibility, a professional attitude and self-discipline.*” (p.15) “A mature student, in short, is one who does not have to be pulled up, checked on and chased up, but who is getting on with his work largely on his own; if it is project work, however, he keeps is advisor informed. ‘On your own’ does not mean that you should ask no questions and get no help. Face your difficulties, label them clearly and ask appropriate persons for advice and assistance.” p.17

The academic program of the CYIP consisted of language instruction, syllabus/tutorial courses and a fieldwork project. While this basic structure remained the same throughout the CYIP’s history, changes were made over time. Initially, almost all of the projects were in the social sciences. This was in keeping with Hart’s original vision that the program should engage students in the challenging issues of the times in India. In the eleven formative years, the fieldwork topics expanded from primarily social science to include more humanities-based projects. In fact, by 1965-66, about ¼ of the projects were based in the humanities. Students were encouraged to meet regularly with a fieldwork advisor, twice a month while the project idea is developing and getting underway and less often but regularly once the work has begun.

Initially all syllabus courses were taken at the university in their location. In the Indian system, lectures were to be supplemented by independent reading and a final exam at the end of the year. Courses had usually started before students arrived. In addition to the standard requirements, program students were required to write a term report each year, with the topic to
be negotiated with the instructor of the course. The expectation was that the papers would be twelve to thirty pages in length with appropriate footnotes and bibliography. pp. 20-21 By the end of the formative years, due in part to strikes which kept campuses closed, and the broadening range of interests among program participants, syllabus courses often took the form of independent reading courses or tutorials following traditional ways of learning, especially in music, arts and crafts including painting, pottery and more.

The program built small libraries based in part on student requests and also provided access to University libraries though the procedures for obtaining library cards, although learning the retrieval and cataloging systems could be often be daunting. American students were accustomed to open stacks and easy checkout options in their home university libraries and not the locked cases, for use in-library-only policies they found in India.

In the early years of the program, students took a test meant to assess their language learning aptitude as part of the application process. The European programs of the time required students to have successfully completed two or more years of language before participation. Since few universities were teaching Indian languages at this time, and since one of the purposes of the program was to produce a cohort with language ability in South Asian languages, such a requirement was not feasible. By the end of this formative period, the test was abandoned when upon analysis, it didn’t deliver the distinctions between those with aptitude for language learning and those without.

Telugu, a Dravidian language, presented sounds and a grammatical structure that seemed to challenge most American students. In addition, teaching materials for non-native speakers were not significantly developed. Furthermore, over the course of the 1960s, the program recognized a shift in every-day language use in Hyderabad of Urdu over Telugu. This was a primary basis for
the decision to re-locate the “Telugu site” from Hyderabad to Waltair in the heart of a Telugu speaking area. Conversation was increasingly used to engage student interest rather than focusing solely on grammar and preparing to read literary texts. Hindi instruction enjoyed a boost with the use of the textbook created by Gumperz and Rumery. And by the 1971-72 year, the program recognized that talented language instructors could be found outside those with traditional university educational experience. Throughout these formative years, the program sought to engage local instructors with innovative pedagogy that made language learning more satisfying and engaging as well as successful for American students. While in the end most Hindi learners and some Telugu learners each year made significant progress with language learning, a few, each year struggled.

**Travel** - A third of the handbook focuses on travel within India during the program breaks and then the trip home. Students were encouraged to travel while in India, though told: “While it is important to leave on vacation, it is equally important to come back.” p. 23 Between a week at Diwali, 2 weeks and 3 weekends at Christmas and several other days scattered throughout the year, fully one of seven months in India was scheduled for travel. It was viewed as an essential part of the India academic experience to see parts of the country. A group trip through Rajasthan consumed the Diwali travel period. For independent travel, students were given instructions on how to notify the program director about where they planned to travel, and to send telegrams if there were unavoidable delays in returning on time. After all, “It is embarrassing to learn that you are in the hospital in Bombay when nobody knew you had left camps!” p.24 The handbook covered the practicalities of bringing your police registration, water treatment tablets, medicines with you as well as information about the more or less comfortable classes of travel. For end of the year travel, students were told about a Rs. 100 circular ticket that could be purchased that allowed
“…almost unlimited stopovers during any 90-day period.” p. 25.

Fully 7 pages cover “That Fabulous Trip Home Afterwards.” Pp.27-33 Travel home via Europe vs. Asia, plane vs. boat for the ocean portion of the voyage, requirements for obtaining visas for other countries, numbers of photos required, whether or not you will have to show your health certificate, and how to approach the Pan Am office are all covered. And the handbook states, “Now that you have learned to live out here, there are many jobs you could do. India needs plenty of help from those who love her…in a year or two we certainly will want to know your professional plans and what you’re doing with your India Background.” P. 35.

Program’s impact - Given the unique nature of this program in India, efforts were made during the formative years to prove the value of the academic India experience. Holmes reported that students studying Hindi on the program and students at Madison studying Hindi were given the same test at the end of the year. The CYIP India students did as well on reading and writing and better at conversation comprehension of the spoken language. Holmes emphasized that in his first year as director, all projects were completed and were of a substantial caliber. In fact, the Department of Indian Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison published two of the projects.

In a 1968 memo to the Division of Foreign Studies U.S. Office of Education, Henry Hill, Dean of the recently formed International Studies and Programs, reported that a survey had been sent to one hundred of the previous participants in the CYIP program. He reported that they had received ninety replies. The replies indicated that thirty-one of forty-three men and twenty-eight of forty-seven women were involved in, or planned to, work or study related to India. The summer of 1972 brought a temporary halt to Wisconsin's College Year in India Program.
During its 53 years Wisconsin's College Year in India Program tried to solve a number of puzzles. How can an academic program be constructed in the United States that inter-faces with India's differing system of higher education? How can changes in Government of India student-visa requirements be addressed? How can students be found on US campuses who are willing to spend a summer and an academic year in India? How can such students be prepared for the challenges of living in India? What health and housing arrangements must the Program provide? How can India's languages be taught most effectively during a summer and an academic year? How can staff in India be prepared to meet challenges presented by American undergraduates? How can students' fieldwork projects and tutorials conducted in India receive grades and academic credits in the United States? etc. Changing with the times became a regular feature with the CYIP.

Student monitors

A New Administrative Model emerges in response to new Indian Government regulations

In what may be a classic example of the expression ‘making lemonade from lemons’, new regulations from the Indian Government forced the University of Wisconsin-Madison to rethink and replace the widely-used model of American faculty directors on site for University of Wisconsin-Madison academic year-long study-abroad programs.

In 1971 the University of Wisconsin-Madison hired James Helfer, a professor of religion at Wesleyan University, to spend a year in Delhi as director. Helfer was a scholar of Indian religion and philosophy but had never been to India. He arranged for John R. Grace, who had graduated from Wesleyan University, to be his assistant. Grace was to reside in Banaras overseeing the
students there. Grace also would travel to Vizakhatpattam as needed to support the students at Andhra University. Grace’s prior experience in India was seen as a valuable asset.

John Grace had spent his junior year in Varanasi. While he was not a participant in the Wisconsin program, he and a fellow Wesleyan student, Peter Kovach, followed the structure of the CYIP program. Grace studied Hindi, undertook a tutorial course, and wrote a fieldwork project on Saiva Siddhanta under the guidance of a professor in the Indology Department of Banaras Hindu University. After he graduated, Grace was awarded a ‘Teaching Fulbright’ award and spent a year teaching English at the Ramakrishna Mission College in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

In March 1971, civil war broke out in East Pakistan, and ten-million refugees poured into India. In December of 1971, India invaded East Pakistan, defeated the Pakistan army in 10 days, and helped establish the new government of Bangladesh. India's actions, however, clashed with US support for Pakistan. In 1972 tensions increased between the governments of India and the United States.

There was an unfortunate outcome for international students wishing to study or conduct research in India. The Indian government announced it would not issue student visas until it had established new, more-rigorous student-visa requirements. Well-known U.S. programs like the American Institute of Indian Studies and the U.S. Fulbright Program were told to wait till the Government of India established its new requirements for foreign study-in-India programs. And the Indian government ended the US Peace Corps program in India as well.

In this uncertain climate, plans for the 1972-73 College Year in India program proceeded cautiously. During the summer of 1972 the thirty students selected for the 1972-73 UW College-Year-in-India Program were studying Hindi and Telugu in Chicago. Professor Helfer had
remained in India, planning to direct the 1972-73 program. John Grace was hired to organize the orientation program. Madison and Chicago were close enough so that Joe Elder could drive to Chicago periodically to participate in orientation sessions.

From the start of the summer, the thirty students were aware the Government of India was not issuing student visas. Since this was a first-time event, it was difficult to calculate the odds of the new regulations being issued in time for the Wisconsin program to begin. Joe Elder and John Grace informed the students about the efforts being made to secure visas. And Joe felt there was reason to be optimistic. The word from India was that the matter of student visas was under active consideration, the U.S. Department of Education had granted PL480 funds for the 1972-73 program year, and Joe possessed a signed Government-of-India letter approving the CYIP for another year (1972-73).

By early August, new problems had arisen. Jim Helfer became ill and had to leave India. A University of Wisconsin-Madison professor, David Knipe, was in Varanasi on a research visa and was asked to consider serving as the 1972-73 director, but his home department of Indian Studies insisted that he return to Madison for the 1973 spring semester.

John and Joe realized that someone had to be in Delhi to assess the situation, needed to meet the Program contacts, follow up with government officials, and, if needed, close the program, and settle the 1971-72 Wisconsin commitments in Delhi, Varanasi, and Vizakhapatnam. Furthermore, if the program was to continue in 1972-73, someone had to be the designated Wisconsin representative to receive the US Government funds that had been awarded to help run the program. Given John Grace’s role as graduate assistant during the 1971-72 program year, his travel to all three sites, his familiarity with the CYIP budget, and his knowledge of university
officials, faculty members, and program personnel, John was seen as the best qualified person to undertake this assignment. He left Chicago on August 10, to prepare for his trip to India. Since the Chicago orientation was still underway, I, Joan Raducha, had been a student on the program during the 1971-72 year, and was asked to come to Chicago to take over the coordination from John Grace. I had attended the program in India as a senior, had graduated with all of my B.A. requirements completed, and had spent the months since the end of the program in Japan teaching English. I flew back to the U.S. a few weeks before John left for India.

John arrived in India on August 14, a day after Professor James Helfer had departed. Grace consulted with Mr. Ranade, the Delhi University contact, and Pradeep Mehendiratta, the head of the American Institute of Indian Studies. Based on their advice, John asked Joe to send a telegram to the Indian Secretary of Education, citing the three-year permission letter that included the 1972-73 year. John also advised Joe to confirm that the program was willing to comply with two rumored concerns of the Indian government: the use of PL480 funds (Rupees owed to the U.S. Government by the Government of India that were to be spent only in India) and the employment of Americans to direct in India programs. Joe sent this communication immediately. But John also cautioned that the path to a decision was not clear. John wrote to Joe “The latest word from Gulati (an Indian official) is that some decision ought to be reached by September 8 (or so). However, that statement, as Mehendiratta [the director of the American Institute of Indian Studies] points out, could easily be another step along the path of indefinite delay. I feel a kinship with K in Kafka’s Trial – guilt is assumed while innocence remains under consideration forever…I’ll try and determine the results if any, of our telegram to the Secretary of Education - a copy of which arrived today.” In the reply that arrived, the Government of India rescinded its previous permission. The Government of India did not address the two rumored concerns. John in India, as
well as Joe and I in the U.S., still hoped that new regulations, once issued, would allow the Wisconsin program to continue. The Government of India gave no dates for announcing its new requirements.

The issue of possibly not having an American faculty director in India now had to be considered. For the present time being, Joe Elder appointed John Grace as the program’s representative. Joe filed the necessary authorization paperwork with the U.S. Office of Education for John to receive PL 480 funds should the program go forward. In a letter to Indian university officials, Joe designated John as the program’s representative.

At the final summer orientation session in Chicago Joe Elder and I broke the news to the assembled CYIP students that their visas were still in limbo. Joe and I collected the thirty students' home addresses, contact information, and phone numbers. We urged all the students to apply without delay for re-admission into their home-colleges' fall semesters. We also told the students to prepare to depart for India at a moment's notice if their visas were suddenly issued. The summer program in Chicago ended. I returned to Madison to assist Joe and to remain in contact with the students, to travel to Washington to secure visas for the students if permission were to arrive, to then fly to JFK to meet the students and distribute plane tickets etc. While in Madison I also assembled Hindi language materials that the students would need. September 18, 1972, was identified as the point of no return. If no visas had been issued by then, the UW would cancel the 1972-73 College Year in India Program. In a five point memo to the students titled ‘If’ … listing the various contingency plans, Joe sought to provide assurance for future program participation should necessary permissions not arrive for the 1972-73 year:
“5. If...we receive no word by September 18, we ourselves shall cancel the Program, and you will be informed by phone...your admission into next year’s Program will be automatic.

“Therefore unattached ever
Perform action that must be done;
For performing action without attachment
Man attains the highest.”

(A quote from the disguised charioteer, Lord Krishna, to Arjuna, Bhagavad Gita, III. 19, translated by Franklin Edgerton.)

On September 14, John wrote in a letter to Joe: “I managed to get our file in front of the Education Ministry on the joint secretary level. I had hoped that by confronting policy people, we might break loose of the more bureaucratic considerations.” John learned that the roadblock extended beyond our program specifics. He wrote: “The answer which came through to me yesterday is that no decision on our program is expected by the 18th and that the likelihood of anything definite during the next few weeks is also quite doubtful. It seems that Mrs. Gandhi is involved in a political policy review centered in the Foreign Ministry and the Education Ministry either can’t or won’t push the matter of international programs.”

The September 18 deadline came and went. There were no visas. Nor had the Government of India announced its new requirements for foreign study-programs in India. I called each 1972-73 student and Joe Elder wrote to each student telling them the 1972-73 program was canceled. He also wrote that if the College Year in India Program re-opened in 1973-74, every 1972-73 student who wanted would be automatically admitted into the 1973-74 Program. Moreover, those students would not have to attend summer school in Madison in 1973. At the end of the 1973 summer, they could leave for India with the other 1973-74 students.
When it became clear that visas would not be issued for the 1972-73 academic year. John began closing down the three program sites. He spent several weeks arranging for the sale or storage of University of Wisconsin-Madison property, and determining severance compensation for local staff. He informed the Delhi landlord and host institutions in Varanasi and Vizakhapatnam that program houses would not be needed. He finalized grade reports and reconciled budgets from the three sites. At the end of October, John returned to the United States.

The Government of India released its new guidelines in November 1972. One important change in the guidelines was that “casual-student” visas were no longer available for foreign students. Foreign students now had to show evidence that they had been formally admitted into a degree, diploma, or certificate course in an Indian institution before they applied for a student visa. This change in visa requirements did not come as a surprise. Before leaving India the previous October, John had reported a conversation with Ramakrishnan at USEFI who: “thinks that the Indian government is anxious to have foreign students as formally associated with University degree programs as possible. That would point to our dropping the more flexible casual student status in favor of say, full time participation in a language diploma program. What that would do to the project dimension of the program is hard to say. Then there are the credit considerations of American universities. From the Indian side, our involvement with a regular university program would be useful because a) it would bolster the credibility of the Indian degree/diploma and b) it would be easier to control the type of scholarship we are doing.” Another important change in the guidelines was that now only Indian citizens could be the directors of foreign study programs in India.

This new Government of India requirement regarding directors challenged the existence of Wisconsin's College Year in India Program. The CYIP had seen an American director as essential.
Now, unless the Program could find a qualified Indian citizen to be its director and the University of Wisconsin-Madison administration agreed, the Wisconsin Program would have to close.

No names of plausible Indian directors surfaced. The Great Lakes Colleges Association had hired an Indian director for its program in Madurai but with unsatisfactory results. Madison administrators agreed that the US academic systems were so complicated, and the expectations of U.S. undergraduates were so demanding, that only an administrator familiar with the U.S. academic world could successfully direct Wisconsin's College-Year-in-India Program. An impasse was at hand.

Joe Elder stated firmly that credit for the survival of the Wisconsin Program went to John Grace and to me. Thinking outside the envelope, we suggested to Joe Elder that the program try functioning without a formal director in India. Paralleling graduate-student Teaching Assistants on the UW-Madison campus, the Program could hire qualified graduate students to accompany the undergraduates to India, enroll with the other students in Indian-language classes, and administer the Program's financial and other affairs on a part-time basis. The graduate students would not be called “Directors,” even though they performed many of a director's activities. They would not be called “Teaching Assistants,” since they were not teaching classes or grading exams. John Grace, Joe Elder, and I finally invented the title “Graduate Student Monitor.” The term “monitor” was used throughout India to refer to a student assigned by a teacher to maintain classroom order in the teacher's absence. Including “Graduate Student” in the title of the role made it clear the monitor was a student and needed only a student visa to come to India. The title helped resolve several problems simultaneously – by definition.
During a meeting with Robert Mulvihill, Dean of International Studies and Programs, Joe Elder, John Grace, and I reasoned that Wisconsin's College Year in India Program could function without a formal director in India. We argue that competent “Graduate Student Monitors” based in India could perform all the director's duties. Dean Mulvihill had to be convinced. Where would one find competent “Graduate Student Monitors?” Joe Elder pointed to John Grace. John spoke Hindi and had studied in India for a year and taught English at an Indian University for a year. While John did not have the status of a professor, John had a Master’s degree, like many lecturers on campus in Madison. Furthermore, John had held a temporary position as an assistant dean at Lawrence University in the spring of 1973. The preceding year John had helped Professor Jim Helfer administer the 1971-1972 College-Year-in-India Program. After the 1972-73 Program was canceled, John had flown to India and settled the Program's affairs in Delhi, Varanasi, and Vizakhapatnam.

Joe Elder argued that it would be difficult to find a better-qualified candidate than John Grace for the Graduate Student Monitor position. Dean Mulvihill wondered who would be responsible for keeping the Program's financial books. Joe, John, and I noted that, with a little training, the Graduate Student Monitors could keep the Program's books. Dean Mulvihill asked if one Graduate Student Monitor could handle the large number of undergraduates expected in 1973-74. We told the dean that I could share the role of monitor. I had participated in the CYIP and was accepted as a graduate student in the department of South Asian Studies. And John and I had decided to marry in the summer of 1973 which made it acceptable to university officials for John and me to oversee the program while living together in India.

Dean Mulvihill still had reservations. Faculty members were directing the other study-abroad programs in Aix-en-Provence, Freiburg, and Madrid for which he was responsible. Having
no faculty member directing the India program posed uncertain risks. For a final guarantee, Dean Mulvihill obtained a promise from Joe Elder that if things went seriously wrong in India, Joe would fly to India and take care of them.

The “Graduate Student Monitor” structure of the Wisconsin Program in India was born. That structure continued with remarkable success through 2004-2005. Over the years, more than three dozen Graduate Student Monitors handled the day-to-day book-keeping, administrative details, and student-related matters, and did much to shape the program. Beginning in 2005, Wisconsin hired Indian scholars with US academic experience to serve as in-India program directors.

**Staffing and Location Changes**

The CYIP saw changes in both the U.S.- and India-based administration over the years. The sites for programs moved when opportunities arose. In 1973-74, twenty-one students participated in the CYIP program situated only in Varanasi. In 1974-75, the University of Wisconsin-Madison re-opened its Telugu campus, and the Program's Telugu-learning students were admitted into Andhra University's Telugu certificate course. In 1976-77 the Varanasi program temporarily relocated to Agra for two years before moving back to Varanasi. Also in 1976-77, the Great Lakes Colleges Association closed its Tamil-language campus in. That same year the University of Wisconsin-Madison opened its Tamil campus in Madurai, and its Tamil-learning students were admitted into Madurai Kamaraj University's Tamil certificate course. By now each campus had its own Student Monitor. Each campus also had a program house with a small library and an ever-growing collection of student-written fieldwork reports. In Varanasi the Program acquired one of its richest assets, the Hindi-teaching services of Virendra Singh.
During the next decade the role of a Resident Coordinator was established on all three campuses, with J. Rajasekaran (“Shaker”) in Madurai, V.S. Bose in Vizakhapatnam/Waltair, and Ramu Pandit in Varanasi. The Resident Coordinators provided critical links between the Wisconsin students, their tutors, and their fieldwork supervisors. The Resident Coordinators also remained on site throughout the year, serving as links between Madison and each campus when Student Monitors were not in India. Starting in 1983-84 and continuing through 1999-2000, Monitors and Coordinators met once a year to compare notes and suggest Program improvements. In 1992 the Telugu Program moved from Vizakhapatnam back to Hyderabad to take advantage of the language-teaching and fieldwork possibilities that had become available.

In 1997 the Government of India authorized the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) to process applications from U.S. students wishing to study in India. Now the College Year in India Program sent its list of accepted students to the AIIS, the AIIS processed and approved the list, and the Program submitted the approved list to the Consulate General of India in Chicago, with a request for their student visas. What had taken months to accomplish in the past could now be accomplished in a week or two.

In the first years of the program, the College of Letters and Science was the administrative home of the College Year in India program. After it became established, the Office of International Studies and Programs (later named the Division of International Studies) became the U.S. based administrative home of the program, though for almost 25 years, the College of Letters and Sciences continued to appoint a tenured faculty member to serve as associate dean (as well as other faculty and staff to assist with advising, interviewing, determining course equivalencies, etc.) Joe Elder remained the lynchpin of the India program.
In 1990, the study abroad office hired Joan Raducha as an assistant dean. Having earned a PH.D. in Buddhist Studies with a focus on South Asian Buddhism, her duties included overseeing the administrative aspects of the College Year in India Program. Joe Elder and she worked side by side to supervise and support the overseas staff, organize developments in the program, troubleshoot problems as they arose, and oversee student academic matters. She continued to hold this portfolio even as she was made the deputy director and then study abroad director overseeing all the programs administered by International Academic Programs until 2005.

Declining applicants for Wisconsin's College Year in India Program led to the closing of the Telugu campus in Hyderabad after the 2000-2001 academic year. Program administrators in Madison decided to replace Student Monitors in India with qualified Indian-citizen Faculty Directors. In 2003-2004 Zoe Timms became the final Student Monitor in Madurai. In 2004-2005 Dr. V. A. Vidya became the first Indian-citizen faculty Director of the Wisconsin program in Madurai. In Varanasi in 2004-2005 Mona Maniar became the final Student Monitor. In 2005-2006 Dr. Ranjana Sheel became the first Indian-citizen faculty Director of the Wisconsin program in Varanasi.

Declining applicants led to the closing of the Wisconsin program in Madurai after the 2007-2008 academic year, leaving only one site in Varanasi. In the summer of 2010, the College Year in India Program appointed Dr. Vidya to be faculty Director of the Wisconsin program in Varanasi. Dr. Vidya moved from Madurai to Varanasi where she continued to be faculty Director through the 2014-2015 academic year.

Starting in 2010, students not wishing to spend an entire academic year in India could enroll in the Program for only the Fall semester, ending the Program's long-standing format requiring
two years of language training for all Program participants. In Madison in 2012 Dr. Lalita Du Perron, Associate Director of Madison's Center for South Asia, became Faculty Coordinator for the College Year in India Program now based in Madison's International Academic Programs office. Starting in 2012, students not wishing to spend an entire academic year in India could enroll in the Wisconsin Program for only the Spring semester.

Following discussions with Madison's International Academic Programs, in the summer of 2015 Washington, DC-based CET Academic Programs began to administer the College Year in India Program in Varanasi, thereby ending Wisconsin's College Year in India Program as it had been known for five decades. CET assumed responsibility for maintaining the program house and staff. It also continued the Wisconsin Program's three long-established components: language-training, tutorials, and fieldwork projects. CET also added two core courses to the program requirements.

Student Recruitment

CYIP Fliers

Bob Holmes provided materials for the first College Year in India flier. During the 1965-66 academic year he had a professional photographer take publicity shots of Program students in action: a group of Delhi students in a Hindi class, three Program men talking to a local shopkeeper, two Program women relaxing with their home-stay family, two Program women receiving traditional-Indian-dance instructions. The large flier (four-fold 16” x 9”) featured a graceful metal carafe on the cover announcing the University of Wisconsin College Year in India Program. Interspersed between the four photographs of Program students in action were Program details. The flier's return address was 305 South Hall on the UW-Madison campus.
The 1970-71 flier was titled generically “College Year in India.” The flier's return address was 1410 Van Hise Hall on the UW-Madison campus, and the flier was mailed to a list of people in India, Europe, Canada, and Australia as well as in the United States. Printed with dark-blue ink on light-blue stock and featuring a photograph of a metal dancing Nataraj (one version of the Hindu Lord Shiva) owned by Joe Elder, the flier was designed to be posted on bulletin boards or faculty doors. The flier included basic information about three undergraduate programs in the United States: Wisconsin's, the Great Lakes Colleges Association's (GLCA's), and the Associated Colleges of the Midwest's (ACM's). Rupee funds Wisconsin received from Washington that year were to be shared with the GLCA and the ACM.

The flier described Wisconsin's required summer language training (Hindi, Urdu, or Telugu) on the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus (that year) followed by an academic year in India at Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University, or Andhra University. Courses in India included an advanced language class, a course selected from the M.A. syllabus, and an independent fieldwork project “which the student plans and carries out with the advice of the resident faculty director and under the supervision of an Indian professor.” The estimated cost of the program was $2,461. The program provided round-trip air travel to India, in-India room, board, and tuition expenses, and a monthly stipend for out-of-pocket expenses. Admission to the program was “limited to mature students of any accredited American college or university.” Preference would be given to applicants with a B average or better who would be juniors during their year in India. Selection criteria included “(1) career interests indicating that a year in India would be useful: (2) an ability to withstand and benefit from the psychological strains of living in an unfamiliar civilization; (3) an interest and aptitude for intensive language study.” Applicants for the program needed to submit (1) a completed application form; (2) a transcript from all colleges
attended; (3) a letter of approval from parents or guardian; (4) three letters of recommendation; (5) a completed modern-language-aptitude test. In subsequent years the modern-language-aptitude-test requirement was dropped. On many campuses the test was difficult to find and administer, and the test provided little useful information. The letter of approval from parents or guardian was also dropped, as were the three letters of recommendation. These requirements were burdens to applicants and provided Madison with little useful additional information.

The 1971-72 flier announced, “Study in India,” featured the dancing Nataraj, and described the GLCA and ACM programs as well as Wisconsin's College Year in India Program. Printed on peach stock with maroon ink, its 16” x 9” format was also designed to be posted on bulletin boards or professors' office doors. In 1971-72 the estimated cost of the Wisconsin program was $3,000. The Program provided round-trip travel to India, in-India room, board, and tuition expenses, and a monthly stipend for out-of-pocket expenses. The summer and academic-year courses provided a total of 30 semester credits.

Subsequent fliers described only Wisconsin's College Year in India Program, displaying the dancing Nataraj in different color combinations. Estimated Program costs steadily increased (1977-78: $3,850; 1979-80: $3,990 excluding summer living expenses).

By 1987 the College-Year-in-India flier had undergone several changes. Comments had been made that the flier's dancing Nataraj over-represented India's Hindus at the expense of India's Muslims, Buddhist, and followers of other religions. An additional reason for changes was that in 1980 the University of Wisconsin-Madison launched its College-Year-in-Nepal Program.

The heading at the top of the large (16” x 11”) 1987-88 flier stated, “University of Wisconsin-Madison College Year Programs in South Asia.” Under that heading, large capital
letters called on readers to “Explore the Cultures of Nepal and India.” A silhouette of the Taj Mahal represented India. Silhouettes of three Kathmandu-valley shrines represented Nepal. The flier announced “Full year programs with full academic credit. Intensive Language, Tutorials, Independent Research. Intensive Language training and Orientation in summer pre session.” The flier stated, “A full year of University of Wisconsin credit is given for completion of the programs, ensuring the quality of the credits earned and simplifying the transfer of credits to colleges and universities in the United States.” The College Year in Nepal program was patterned after the College Year in India Program but with heavier language instruction first semester and a second semester free of classroom work for full-time concentration on fieldwork projects. Both the Nepal and India Programs seemed likely to appeal to similar undergraduate audiences; so advertising both programs on the same flier made economic sense. The Programs' mailing lists were culled or bought from such groups as the Association for Asian Studies.

The 1987-88 flier went on to say, “Students have submitted fieldwork projects in such diverse subjects as Agronomy, Anthropology, Art, Botany, Dance, Economics, Film, Geography, History, Journalism, Linguistics, Philosophy, Political Science, Religion, Sociology, South Asian Studies, Theater, and Women's Studies.” Trained University of Wisconsin personnel in Madison and at each site in India and Nepal offered academic counseling and put students in touch with qualified tutors and fieldwork advisors. In India, the three program sites were at Banaras Hindu University (for Hindi-Urdu students), Andhra University, Waltair, Andhra Pradesh (for Telugu students), and Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamilnadu (for Tamil students). The Delhi site had been closed in 1972 when all the India sites were closed. For a variety of reasons, the Delhi site was never reopened.
The 1987-88 flier described “A Chance to Explore a New Culture.” “India and Nepal are the home of a variety of cultures strikingly different from the one with which most American students are familiar. Living accommodations range from dormitories and apartments to a variety of family situations, with a flexibility that encourages each student to adapt to the new environment as he or she wishes.”

The 1987-88 flier also announced, “The Year in Asia Has Been an Important Turning Point for Many Participants.” “Students have been going to India since 1961 on Wisconsin's College Year in India Program, and they have been going to Nepal since 1980. Over the years, some of their comments have been, “… an incredible opportunity for learning …” “… helped me choose my current career.” “… the decisive experience of my academic and professional life.” “… placed my own culture in the context of the many varied cultures of the world.” “… tremendously maturing experience.” “… I learned graphically that life in the U.S. was the exception … not the rule.” The flier announced that “Graduates of our programs are using their India and Nepal experiences in such widely varied professions as teaching, law, medicine, social work, refugee care, civil rights, documentary filmmaking, dance performance, business, journalism, music, and creative writing.”

The flier declared that “Selection is made on the basis of the following qualifications: Junior or Senior standing (recent graduates may also apply, provided they have not yet enrolled in a graduate program); overall college average of B or better; academic or career interests that will be enhanced by the year abroad; ability to withstand and benefit from the psychological stress of living in an unfamiliar culture; interest in and aptitude for intensive language training.” The flier added, “Although most interviews will be conducted by telephone, if necessary, candidates should be willing to travel at their own expense to a central location for an interview.”
Not including the summer fees, the estimated fees for the 1987-88 Programs were $5,600 for India and $6,600 for Nepal. The fees included tuition, round-trip air fare, room, board, and pocket money while abroad. Some financial aid was possible.

For the next ten years the India and Nepal programs were advertised in a single flier. The top of the flier stated, “University of Wisconsin-Madison College Year Programs in South Asia.” Under that heading, large capital letters called on readers to “Explore the Cultures of Nepal and India.” Each year the flier included the silhouettes of the Taj Mahal and the three Kathmandu-valley shrines. Each year the flier appeared on different colored paper stock using different ink color.

The 1994-95 flier reported that the Telugu program was now in Hyderabad University, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. It also mentioned the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Kerala Performing Arts Summer Abroad Program. UW-Madison Professor Phillip Zarrilli of the Theatre and Drama Department started the Program in 1993 in Kerala's capital city, Thiruvananthapuram, primarily for his students. During summer months the Program provided brief Malayalam language instruction but concentrated on training in Kerala's performing arts including highly costumed Kathakali dance and Kerala's martial art Kalaripayattu. The 1994-95 flier advised interested students to contact Madison's Office of International Studies and Programs for further information.

The 1997-98 “Explore the Cultures of India and Nepal” flier announced that “Not including summer school tuition, housing and food costs, and miscellaneous program-related expenses, estimated fees for 1997-98 were $11,500 for India and $12,500 for Nepal.
By 1999-2000 the “Explore the Cultures of India and Nepal” flier no longer included silhouettes of the Taj Mahal and the three Kathmandu-valley shrines. Instead, one photo showed a Program student viewing the Taj Mahal as it emerged from early-morning mist. Another photo showed multiple shrines in Durbar Square, Patan, Nepal. Other photos showed a young Tibetan monk, a farm woman weaving at a loom, and a Program student shaping a large clay pot.

During the late 1990s the UW-Madison Office of International Studies and Programs began printing many simple 11” x 9” three-fold fliers advertising its rapidly-growing number of study-abroad campuses. Racks on the second floor of Bascom Hall enabled students to pick up handfuls of fliers to help them choose where to study abroad. The Madurai flier showed Program students before Madurai’s Meenakshi temple. The Hyderabad flier showed Program students before the Golconda Fort.

By 2000-2001 students no longer needed to learn about Wisconsin's College Year in India Program from fliers posted on bulletin boards or professors' office doors. They could visit websites to learn details about a variety of different India programs including Wisconsin's. By 2002 Madison's Study-Abroad office had prepared a power-point presentation of Wisconsin's College Year in India Program in Banaras.

Interviewing applicants

During the early years of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's College Year in India Program, Professors Henry Hart and Joe Elder hoped that standardized tests and professional interviews might help select students for the program. This was based in part on their awareness of personnel-mobilization procedures developed during World War II. When possible, Program students took a language-aptitude test developed in World War II. Students from the Madison
campus were interviewed by Marianne McManus of the student clinical services for her advice on how well they might survive the separation from home and the cultural adjustments of living in India. But it soon became clear to both Henry and Joe that the information obtained through these procedures was at best limited.

To both Henry and Joe, it seemed important for faculty members with India experience to interview students applying to go to India. India was different from other study-abroad countries. Furthermore, Wisconsin’s India program differed in important ways from most other study-abroad programs such as those in France and Germany. The India program insisted on a summer of intensive language training in the United States before students went to India, and it required considerable academic self-direction after students arrived in India. Students applying for the program needed to know this. In the Spring of 1964 Joe assumed responsibility for arranging interviews with all program applicants. He conducted most of the interviews by phone. That year thirty-three students applied for the program. Joe selected twenty-three. He invited three of the ten rejected students to reapply in 1965. The selected students started their Hindi and Telugu language training in June 1964 on the Berkeley campus of the University of California.

Students applying for the program were asked to submit a recent academic transcript, a statement explaining why they were interested in going to India, and letters of reference from faculty members or personal friends. Over time, the letters of reference were dropped. They placed an added burden on the applicant, and they rarely provided any significant additional information about the student. The key pieces of information in the students' files were their academic transcripts and their statement explaining their interest in going to India.
From the start, it seemed useful to have two University of Wisconsin-Madison professors interview each applicant. After interviewing applicants, the two professors could compare notes and select and de-select the applicants. The two professors interviewed the applicants during three weekends in late February and early March. One weekend they would interview on the Madison campus (University of Wisconsin-Madison students and students from nearby colleges such as Beloit or Lawrence University). Another weekend they would interview in New York City and Boston (students from the ivy league and the east coast). One weekend they would interview in the mid-west (Cleveland, Toledo). The meeting place would be a hotel room or an airport meeting room. Each interview with a professor would last about half an hour. The Wisconsin professors would interview the west-coast applicants by telephone.

During the early years, Professor Alex Wayman of the Department of Indian Studies was the second interviewer. He used astrology to help determine who should and should not go to India. He once rejected a student whose horoscope did not match his mother's. When Alex Wayman left the University of Wisconsin-Madison to go to Columbia University, Professor Dan Matsen of the Department of Indian Studies became the second interviewer. Professor Matsen was a linguist who had produced instructional language materials in Oriya and Telugu. He was especially interested in increasing the number of Telugu students and developing additional Telugu language materials. After Professor Matsen did not receive tenure, Joe Elder became the sole interviewer.

The faculty interviewers looked for different things during the interviews, drawing from materials in the students’ folders. Why did the student want to go to India? If it was because India was so “spiritual,” the student would be told of the frequent treatment of animals in India and of British descriptions of India as “one vast latrine.” Were there questions from the students' transcripts that needed to be looked into – Fs? course drops? gaps? Had they taken any courses
that looked particularly interesting or relevant for going to India? How difficult would it be for
them to survive physically in India? Had they had camping experience (camping was always seen
as a “plus”)? What were the toughest physical hardships they had experienced? Had they traveled
abroad? Had they spent periods of time outside their comfort zones? How might they survive the
lack of privacy in India? How might they survive the lack of academic structure in India? Had they
ever done any research projects on their own? What fieldwork projects or tutorials might they
work on in India? Often the interviews began with the question, ”Do you have any questions about
the Program?” From then on, the students often directed the conversation.

The interviews raised policy questions. Could a blind student come on the Program? Could
a young mother bring her son? Could a husband bring his wife? Could a fieldwork project be
conducted at a different location than the campus? Could a documentary film be substituted for a
fieldwork project? Could a feature film be substituted for a fieldwork project? Could a novel be
substituted for a fieldwork project? Could creative essays be substituted for a fieldwork project. If
substitutions were possible, who would evaluate the substitution?

Over the years the interviews increasingly became occasions to “sell” the program. Many
students were applying to multiple programs. Joe would describe some of the more interesting
fieldwork projects one could carry out in India. Joe would also describe graduate-school and career
opportunities of students who had completed the program.

Beginning in 1963 the Program included a Telugu campus. The interviews now provided
an opportunity to convince students to learn Telugu and go to the Program's Telugu campus in
Hyderabad or Vizakhapatnam. After the Program established a Tamil campus in Madurai in 1976-
77, the interviews provided an opportunity to convince students to learn Tamil and go to the Tamil
campus in Madurai. During the interviews, Joe often raised the possibility of learning Telugu or Tamil and studying in Hyderabad/Vizakhapatnamor Madurai rather than in Varanasi. One of the program’s goals was to broaden the range of South Asian languages in which students could become proficient. In addition, the different regional locations offered different types of fieldwork topics.

After students had been accepted into the Program, they were asked to provide a preferential list of the campuses in India. Since there were always too many students wanting to study in Varanasi, part of Joe's responsibility every year was to find which students might be willing to go to Vizag/Hyderabad or Madurai rather than Varanasi. Combining information students had provided in their applications or during their interview and looking at their preferential campus list, Joe would send a letter to students congratulating them for being admitted into the Program and informing them of the campus to which they had been assigned. When that campus was not Varanasi, Joe provided the most convincing explanation he could for why they had been assigned to a campus other than Varanasi. He would add that they were not satisfied with their campus assignment, they should feel free to appeal it. They were told that this would require a letter from them to a committee (ultimately only Joe) explaining their appeal. Most of the times, students accepted their non-Varanasi assignments. If students appealed, giving reasons why they really should go to Varanasi, they would receive a letter back from Joe informing them that the committee had re-assigned them to Varanasi.
The Student Monitor Experience-1994-1996
Case Studies

Over the years, student monitors coordinated the program and contributed to its success. Most CYIP monitors had been students on the program in a previous year. Some had participated in the program years earlier, others during a year or two before they assumed the role of monitor. Past participants in the program would often get in touch with Professor Elder and state their interest in the position. The positions were posted in the early spring semester and generally a handful of applications were received. Occasionally, Professor Elder would recruit a past participant based on his recollection of the student or a recommendation from that student’s monitor. While it was a year-by-year appointment, the monitor typically filled the role for two years (though there were cases of monitors who remained for one or three years).

The monitors came to Madison for several days during the summer before the program began for two purposes: 1) to assist with the summer long orientation of the student participants and 2) for training on the duties they were expected to perform while in India (or a review of duties if they were about to return to India for their second year of service). The monitors generally arrived in India sometime in August, just a few weeks before a fresh batch of student program participants were expected. Along with local staff including assistant coordinators, language instructors, fieldwork assistants, and program household staff, the monitor would prepare to greet the students upon their arrival, provide practical and cultural orientation activities, and help the new arrivals settle into their academic year in India.

The monitors were expected to:

- provide support for the cultural adjustment, settling in, and academic program of students
- nurture positive group dynamics
- coordinate with local staff
- serve as a liaison with local academic institutions
- contend with changing circumstances and country specific events
- manage a budget and provide the study abroad office in Madison with fiscal reports
- maintain communications with the study abroad office in Madison for routine as well as extraordinary situations
- provide reports about the state of the program and suggestions for improvements

In short, these young staff were expected to make the program work during the course of the year. This was a hefty expectation given that many of them had little or no prior administrative, counselling, or budgetary experience. The University of Wisconsin-Madison asked them to manage local personnel and basically any issues that arose. These personnel were sometimes years older than the monitors, had years of experience with the program, and at times wanted to act quite independently. Others were brand new and needed guidance.

Many monitors were just a year or two older than the student participants and yet came to understand that the students and local residents considered them to be the local representative of a major U.S. academic institution. Most importantly, they had spent a year or more in India themselves, were enthusiastic, quick to learn and deeply cared about how the students would experience India. On a whole, these young monitors more than met the expectations.

The CYIP tradition, started by John Grace and me, the first student monitors, was for the monitor to send a message with a single word, “Cheers,” to Professor Elder once the students arrived. In the 1970s, the word was sent via telegram (expensive at the time and hence kept very short), and in subsequent years as technology developed, the message was sent via fax or email. Once the message arrived, Professor Elder sent a letter to parents, some of whom were
understandably anxious about their student preparing to spend a year in India. The letter informed parents that their student had arrived safely, as well as providing a local mailing address and other information about how to stay in touch, the pros and cons of sending packages (might lift spirits but also were occasionally lost or held in customs with frustrating red tape), possibilities for transferring funds etc.

Communication changed with the times. In the 1970s, phone calls needed to be booked ahead of time at a remote location, were expensive, and unreliable. The monitors made administrative calls only if necessary. By the nineties, the program houses had phones which the monitors could use to contact the office in Madison. And parents could call their student, though the time difference did present logistical challenges. By the early 2000’s cell phones allowed monitors more ease of communication, and student-parent contact became direct and immediate.

Flights tended to arrive in the middle of the night. Arrival in an Indian airport after a flight of 20+ hours often felt quite chaotic for any arrival, with customs agents followed by an entry filled with taxi drivers vying for attention. And so, the monitors met the students at the international point of arrival airport with safe transport arranged. The group settled in a local hotel where they spent a few days getting over jetlag, buying clothes suitable for the Indian environment, getting accustomed to local food, and doing some pre-arranged cultural sight-seeing. The monitors, often with the help of local staff, usually prearranged for the students as a group to travel by train to their destination cities.

Once at their sites, a whirlwind of activities began. The monitors along with the resident coordinators helped the students to locate and adjust to housing, register with the local authorities, find their way around the city, and begin to focus on their academic program.
While an exhaustive year by year account could tell a detailed history of the program, we are rather illustrating the types of situations that arose in one two-year period 1994-96. The three monitors all served for these two years and encountered some similar and other site-specific situations. The summaries that follow illustrate the diverse situations that monitors faced and how they rose to the challenges presented. The information is drawn from the monitors’ recollections, the files that Joe Elder kept, which included written reports from the monitors and communications between the monitors and Madison staff, and my personal recollections.

In its most expansive phase, the CYIP focused on having sites in three linguistic areas: Hindi/Urdu, Telugu, and Tamil. The CYIP had only recently moved the Telugu language-based program from Vizakhapatnam back to Hyderabad. The monitor therefore needed to work toward building the program’s support structure as well as dealing with the routine duties.

During the two years described below, the Varanasi (Hindi/Urdu) and Madurai (Tamil) sites were well established. Language staff, fieldwork assistants, and resident coordinators had years of experience with program students and the system of new monitors every few years. Over time, they formed solid working relationships.

All the monitors handled the day-to-day duties focused on the students. Some of the shared problems in these years included unexpected health threats (an outbreak of Plague during those years), and modernization of technology (computers and email were slowly becoming available in India while the CYIP student expectation for access was high), managing the relationships with the host institutions including problems with language instruction offered by the local institutions that provided admission to certificates or diplomas and therefore paths to visas for the program students. Other issues were particular to individual sites, such as developing a staff, scarcity of short-term housing, and the changing nature of the sites themselves.
Hyderabad – 1994-96, Devon Grams, Monitor

Devon had participated in the program in 1992-93. He then returned to finish his senior year of college at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. A microbiology major, he was interested in a career in international work, perhaps public health. His research project while a student was *Pre-natal Diagnostic tests in India: Old traditions Manipulating Modern Technology* (like all CYIP student projects a copy was held in the University of Wisconsin Library).

In his four-page application letter for the position Devon wrote that he would “…strive to provide the students an environment that is not only safe and secure, but also conducive for growth and gaining the most out of their year abroad. I realize that the position of student monitor requires fulfilling many different and varied responsibilities as well as a great deal of hard work. I would gratefully accept these responsibilities…”

The Telugu program had begun in Hyderabad in the 1960s, moved to Vizakhapattnam for most of the 1970s and 1980s, and then returned to Hyderabad in 1992. The movement between locations was fundamentally due to a search for the best instructional and living environment in which Telugu could be learned. But each relocation meant recreating the support network for the program and its students.

Devon was one of the first student participants after it returned to Hyderabad. When Devon became the monitor in 1994, the Hyderabad program was still developing its support staff, creating networks of contacts, and sorting out the best local institutional affiliation. Also, available technological resources (computers, email, phones) and associated student expectations were undergoing rapid development at this time in India. Devon would need to contend with these administrative challenges as well as typical student issues of cultural adjustment and the academic setting in India.
The Hyderabad-bound students arrived in Madras on August 24th along with the Madurai bound students. Devon and Mary Rader, the Madurai monitor, met the students and provided an introductory orientation to the students including essential like buying comfortable Indian style clothes and cultural site-seeing. The Hyderabad students then travelled to Hyderabad as a group. During much of September, Devon consulted with the students as they settled into Hyderabad including finding housing, cultural orientation, refining their tutorial and fieldwork project ideas, meeting tutors, beginning language classes. Devon wrote that the five students were “…cohesive, resourceful, amiable and respectful, and culturally interested,” which he sincerely appreciated as a first-year monitor.

Normal and Extraordinary Health Issues

Managing health issues that arose required both discretion and empathy. It was not uncommon for one or more students to become ill in the first weeks or at some point during the year. Besides empathy, the monitor needed to remind students, without implying any blame, of information they had been given about their role in consuming safe water and food. The monitor also had to make sure systems were in place to address common illnesses as well as unusual ones that might arise. The best local medical care, doctors, and facilities needed to be identified for students. Arranging for such resources was a challenge in a relatively new program site. Was a doctor willing to be on retainer? What services would an in-patient facility provide? (In India, it was not uncommon for relatives to provide the meals for a patient).

In late September 1994, unexpected news began circulating about cases of Plague in parts of southern and western India. While the outbreaks were not in Hyderabad, the name of the disease - Plague - conjured up concerning images for parents of the students back in the United States. The
fact was that in 1994, Plague could be cured with antibiotics. It was no longer the scourge it was in the Middle Ages.

In 1994, the major form of communication between the program and the U.S. administration was via fax. Upon being contacted, Devon confirmed all was well with the students. Based on this information, Professor Elder contacted the parents to let them know their students were healthy and had been informed of current treatments. The study abroad office in Madison sent to all the program sites Center for Disease Control explanations of the disease and suggested the best antibiotic treatments in the event someone contracted the illness. Devon was able to stockpile some tetracycline in the event it was needed, though the need never arose.

At the same time, Devon was dealing with another challenging administrative situation based on a health concern. The local police commissioner in whose office the CYIP participants had to register upon arrival as foreign students, insisted that the students needed to have an HIV-AIDS test. The US Government had created regulations in the 1980s regarding HIV-AIDS testing of immigrants to the US. As quid pro quo, the local authorities demanded that our students be tested for HIV-AIDS.

Before departure, the study abroad office in Madison was aware of the Indian Government’s testing requirement. There was a concern regarding student health confidentiality had the test for our students been required. Even if they were tested, we could not require student test results to be shared. We were relieved when the Indian consulate confirmed that the HIV-AIDs test was not required for foreigners staying in India for less than a full year.

Nevertheless, the local authorities persisted. Since registration was required, things were at a standstill. Devon spent considerable time sorting out this dilemma. He obtained letters from University of Wisconsin authorities reiterating the Indian Consulate’s stated rules. He coordinated
a request to the University of Hyderabad with which the program was affiliated, to contact the local authorities on the program’s behalf. In the end, despite many tense moments, the students did not have to take the test. Devon had managed a complicated administrative task which neither he nor the administrators in Madison had anticipated.

**Personnel**

In Varanasi and Madurai, a local person had served as resident coordinator for many years. Most years, the monitor and resident coordinator worked well as a team, respecting each other’s strengths, and complementing each other as they strove to make the program year successful for the students. The resident coordinators were generally older than the monitors and having a new colleague/supervisor every few years was not always easy for the them. Yet on the whole, this arrangement worked remarkably well.

The role was in essence to:

- Assist the Student Monitor in any of the Monitor’s activities (e.g., arranging and maintaining university affiliation, police registration, the program center, the program center employees, special events, Wisconsin student housing/meals/healthcare/travel etc.)
- Identify local resource personnel who might serve as tutors or fieldwork advisors for the Wisconsin students
- Introduce Wisconsin students to local resource personnel and provide support services for the students/tutors/fieldwork advisors
- Maintain ties with the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s study abroad office during the monitor’s absence (from May until August)

When the Telugu program relocated to Hyderabad, the plan was to find someone to fill this role at this program site. For the first few years, no one was found to fill this role. Then, University of
Wisconsin-Madison faculty with local contacts identified such a man named Surya. He stated an interest in working with the American students and had many contacts in Hyderabad. He had regular employment with the Indian Railway and planned to take a year’s leave of absence from that full time position for a trial period of one year. Devon was enthusiastic about working with this person as a team.

Unfortunately, soon after Devon’s arrival, problems emerged with Surya. It turned out that taking a leave from his secure position with the railway was not easily done. So he tried to continue his regular employment while also serving as resident coordinator. He was marginally helpful to Devon when he was available, but his time limitations became clear even before the students arrived. Rather than being available 40 hours so a week to help set up the program center and plan for assisting students with finding housing, planning events etc. two hours a day seemed to be the most Surya could manage, and even this limited was neither predictable nor on a daily basis. Devon was not satisfied with this level of help. Once they arrived, the students, who were told in Madison that they could expect a local coordinator who would help them locate local resources, were also not satisfied.

While the monitors were employees of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, on site in India, on a day-to-day basis, they were largely operating on their own. While personnel management had been discussed during the monitor’s training in general, each situation that arose had unique features. There was no human resource office to consult. Devon sought advice from the office in Madison, but phone access limited, and faxes did not support easy dialogue and problem solving. With the advice he received, Devon attempted to resolve the different expectations that the program and Surya had for the assistant coordinator role. Ultimately, Devon looked for and identified a local Institute which seemed like a promising resource to provide the
services of a resident coordinator, offer language classes that met our students’ needs, and also create a space for a program computer that was becoming increasingly in demand. While Surya nominally continued in the role for the remainder of the 1994-95 year, the trial year ended Surya’s work with the program.

Another difficult personnel issue involved a member of the program’s kitchen/maintenance household staff, an elderly member, who had worked with the program in Vizakhapattnam and relocated to Hyderabad to remain with the program. The program divided the pay of the employees into 14 payments. The local staff received twelve months for the year as salary and then the equivalent of one month for health insurance and the other month’s payment for the employee to save for retirement. But with the everyday needs he had, this staff person had not saved for retirement. His health declined as he aged and at a certain point, he was no longer able to perform his duties. And the program house needed someone to buy food at local markets, act as a program guard at times, etc. Once again through long-distance conversations with Professor Elder and me, in my capacity as assistant dean in the study abroad office, it was decided that the staff person should be retired with a year of salary. Devon was asked to inform the person of the decision, not an easy conversation for anyone, much less a young man in his twenties dealing with a senior long-term staff member. But it was accomplished with kindness and the program was able to plan for the following year staffing.

Institutional affiliation

In order to spend 8-9 months in India, a tourist visa was insufficient. Indian government rules changed over the years. In 1994, foreign students needed to be admitted and then registered for a diploma or certificate course at an Indian University approved by the University Grants
Commission. When the CYIP returned to Hyderabad in the 1990s, it was decided to register the students for a Telugu diploma course at the University of Hyderabad. Professor V. Narayana Rao, a senior faculty member at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, had determined that the instruction would be beneficial for our students.

There were some differences in pedagogical approaches between the U.S. and Indian faculty. At times, this led to frustrations for both instructors and students. American students expected language classes to be participatory and not lecture format. They were interested in using the language in everyday situations and not the intricacies of grammar. Female students expected to be called upon as frequently as their male counterparts were. Instructors expected a more formal type of respect than American students were accustomed to demonstrating. While some adjustments could and were made at times, ultimately, the largest obstacle to this affiliation’s success was distance. The University was located on the outskirts of the city, and the time travelling there and back was frustrating for students who also had tutorial classes to attend and fieldwork to conduct.

As monitor, Devon heard the students’ frustration as well as instructor complaints. Considering that the resident coordinator position also needed to be rethought, he approached the Henry Martyn Institute (HMI), a local teaching/research organization with a plan for the 1995-96 year. The HMI’s stated mission was to promote reconciliation between people of different faiths and cultures through research and teaching. The HMI was willing to organize special Telugu classes, and act as the resident coordinator helping students make local contacts. Furthermore, the HMI also was willing to make space in their building for a computer station for our students, as the demand and expectation for computer access for papers and email was growing. HMI was judged to be a well-
organized research and community center with many resources, and a number of friendly, helpful staff which assisted the students.

But the HMI was not a University Grants Commission institution and so could not be the host according to student visa regulations. However, another visa category had been established – student tour group. This allowed students to obtain visas based on the fact that they would be in India for less than a year and would do educational touring. Since our program included cultural touring upon arrival, during the October holidays, and travel during a winter break, our CYIP students met the criteria for this category. After communication with Madison faculty and study abroad staff and multiple meetings, arrangements were made for the HMI affiliation. Some parts of the arrangement worked very well for the 1995-96 year. The HMI helped with the arrival and settling in of students. The Telugu instruction which HMI arranged was successful in identifying a talented language teacher and in front-loading classes in the first term so students could use the language in their fieldwork during the second semester. The HMI staff provided guidance for the purchase of computers and an email system. They were helpful in guiding students, especially those with social science interests in their fieldwork projects. But some students associated frustrations they were experiencing living in a different culture, and lacking traditional amenities of life, with HMI and this led to dissatisfaction by those students and by the staff at HMI. The arrangement with HMI didn’t work out over time, but it filled a gap year as further program developments were made in subsequent years.

**Madurai-1994-96, Mary Rader, monitor**

Mary Rader was a participant in the Madurai program in 1988-89. She returned to Kalamazoo College to finish her B.A. in 1990, spent a year in Madurai on the American Institute of Indian Studies Tamil language program during the 1992-93 academic year. In June 1994 she
completed a Master’s degree in South Asian Studies at the University of Washington, Seattle. After working with the Madurai CYIP, she went on to earn a degree in Library and Information Studies and a successful career as an academic librarian with a focus on South Asia and International collections.

In her application letter, Mary described several of her work and educational experiences. She wrote about the administrative and organizational duties she had filled, concluding: “…I learned how to serve as a liaison between people’s experiences and experiences of different cultures.” She had also done her research into the status of the program and the role of monitor, consulting both with a previous student monitor and with Rajasekaran, the resident coordinator about the position.

The Madurai program was well established when Mary arrived as monitor. The program had been in operation since 1976). Jesudasan Rajasekaran (called Sekar) had been with the program, first as a fieldwork assistant and then as resident coordinator. During the 1993-94 year, Sekar had managed the program without a student monitor present. Relationships with the American College, Lady Doak College, and Madurai Kamaraj University were well established. The program house and staff were ongoing. And from her year as a student on the program and then a year with the AIIS program. Mary was familiar with many local resources, Madurai in general and the region. She treated her role as monitor seriously whole also having a lighthearted touch in communicating with the students and with the office in Madison. The message she sent announcing the students’ arrival in 1994 had the traditional word “Cheers” in it and signed off in a style familiar in ‘Indian’ English: “CHEERS! Everyone has arrived safely, and the program begins. Please inform the parents. This is for your kind information only. Thanking you, I remain, Yours sincerely.’ I remember smiling when I read that fax.
**Academic Issues**

With her advanced degree and experiences in India, Mary focused much of her reports on the challenges of being an intellectual mentor to the undergraduates. In addition to language study and tutorials, students were expected to conduct an original research project and write up the results. For virtually every student participant, this was the first time they were expected to undertake such an academic project. This project earned twelve academic credits, the equivalent of four semester long courses. The students in Madurai had the additional challenge of using the Tamil language in their research. Tamil, a Dravidian language, took years to master. The students had studied Tamil for a summer and studied second year Tamil while in India. Most could navigate everyday matters but needed fieldwork assistants for their research projects.

During their first month in Madurai, Mary helped the students identify a topic and undertake a small project. The Master’s degree she earned in South Asian Studies helped her to work with students on a broad range of topics such as: ‘The Pragmatics of Politics,’ ‘The Dweller in the Realm of Truth,’ ‘Beggars in Madurai,’ ‘Generational Attitudes towards Healthcare,’ and ‘Women and Kolams’. At the end of the month, the students presented the results of their fieldwork to each other. Mary wrote: “The aim of this exercise was to get the students to start thinking analytically about their surroundings as well as to start them writing.” Mary recognized that for many students, this was the first time they had to verbally present their work to others. That alone was a learning experience for them. And they learned in the process about local resources that Indian students had to work with on a regular basis. The students either had to hand-write a paper or to use the computer (with limited hours, unlike in the U.S. where students largely had 24-hour access) the CYIP had arranged at local educational institutions.
Complementing the advice Mary provided, a fieldwork advisor (in 1994-95 an Indian scholar from Madras and in 1995-96 an expatriate long-term resident scholar of Madurai) listened to the presentations, gave comments, and met with the students individually to give them pointers on methodology that they could utilize for their upcoming larger projects. As the students ventured into the field, prepared their fieldwork proposals and outlines, and went out to conduct their research, Mary was the day-to-day resource for the students. She was an understanding sounding board, encouraging and challenging students. As students refined and, in some cases, changed their topics, Mary had to walk a fine line of keeping them on task while recognizing the obstacles they encountered while conducting fieldwork while becoming familiar with Indian culture.

In her years as monitor, Mary confronted a challenge presented by the changing academic infrastructure in the U.S. In the early years of the CYIP, University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty assessed the work done by a student and channeled the work into appropriate University of Wisconsin course titles which then were sent to the registrar and appeared on the student’s transcript. Students from other universities who participated in the program then brought this transcript to their own university which translated it into the students’ degree program. As more students studied abroad and as the academic recording systems in the US became increasingly computerized, efforts were made to systematize the equivalency process so that it could largely be managed by staff rather than faculty. Special course numbers were established for study abroad courses, though students who wished to receive particular credit towards their major had to prove to department faculty that the course was a reasonable substitute for a course taught on campus. This process started on site in India demanding that the monitors become familiar with the University of Wisconsin course catalog. The monitors worked with students to suggest equivalents which were then sent to Madison for approval and recording.
Program developments and adjustments

While Madurai had many productive systems in place, adjustments were constantly done to improve the program or to solve a problem. The monitors had to call on their support network and their own ingenuity to conceptualize and make these adjustments. Tamil classes taught by the Madurai Kamaraj University faculty were being taught at the program house so that students didn’t have to travel all the way to the University’s campus, some distance away. Mary wondered if the students wouldn’t benefit from spending more time in a different location. When she learned that the AIIS building would not be used one year, she made an arrangement for the classes to be taught there. This arrangement had the additional advantage of providing access to instructional equipment (a DVR etc.) that the program house did not have. When students needed more computer access, arrangements were made with Lady Doak College to supplement the access arranged with the American College. As more LGBTQ students were comfortable coming out in the U.S., Mary recognized that the orientation materials given to students before coming needed to be updated to address concerns these students might have and attitudes/situations they might encounter in India.

As the cooks/cleaners aged and became more central to the economic support of their families, Mary arranged for life insurance policies for them. When a given lecturer seemed to lose enthusiasm for participating in a tour or lecture series, Mary diplomatically ended the relationship while finding a substitute.

Just a few years earlier, a competing semester long program for American students began in Madurai. The program was more expensive than the Wisconsin program and therefore they had more funds to spend. They were willing to pay tutors and fieldwork assistants more than
Wisconsin had been paying (and which these staff had considered fair). So in this changing market, Mary had to assess what was reasonable and make recommendations for increases for budget in subsequent years.

Mary learned that our Nepal program regularly organized a ‘re-entry’ meeting towards the end of the program. Remembering her first return to the US after her year in India, she decided to organize a reentry program for the Madurai students. While the students didn’t choose to focus their discussion on the issue of re-entry, they did spend the time-sharing experiences from the year, and Mary recognized that different groups of students needed different types of interaction and saw the value in this rather than being disappointed or insisting on her original agenda.

**Advice for the future**

Over the years, departing monitors looked back on their experience and to the future and offered observations and suggestions to their successors. Such suggestions and observations improved the program’s academic structure, as well as administrative challenges faced by monitors.

Mary emphasized the importance of lecture series that exposed students to topics with which they were unfamiliar. She noted that organized events at the program house such as concerts brought the students in contact with the community in productive ways. She emphasized the importance of maintaining a robust group of fieldwork assistants because they not only helped with the fieldwork but also often represented the one young Indian with whom our students might have contact. She wrote detailed descriptions of the students’ fieldwork projects and problems they may have encountered, from changing topics, to problems with fieldwork advisors-student relationships and how these were addressed.
Mary’s reports led to the Madison office developing the summer orientation for monitors to include staff management training for situations when conflicts arose as they had during her second year in Madurai. While the cooks/cleaners did their work, the atmosphere was more subdued with the fighting among these three staff. The program budget included both University of Wisconsin-Madison funds and federal funds. Certain categories of expenditures could be made with only one or the other of these sources. She suggested some practical points for the training given to the monitors about managing the budget and reporting back to Madison.

**Varanasi - 1994-96, John Melvin, monitor**

John attended the CYIP Varanasi program in the 1988-89 school year and he conducted his fieldwork project on economic and social change in two villages outside Varanasi. He then returned to Hamilton College in upstate New York to complete his senior year graduating with a major in Sociology. He then moved to Washington, D.C. working in the field of international economic development and returned to India to work for CARE International on a project promoting microenterprise development. After completing his tenure as monitor in 1996, he moved to the San Francisco Bay Area and began a career as an educator, first as a middle school History teacher, then becoming a school principal. He completed his Doctorate of Education at University of California Berkeley in 2017 and now lives in Portland, Oregon continuing to work as an elementary school principal.

**Group dynamics**

Many years, five to ten students attended each of the CYIP sites in India although there were occasionally groups as large as twenty and twice only one single student at a site. In 1994-95, ten students studied in Varanasi. In 1995-96, fourteen students were on the program there.
Regardless of the number, issues of homesickness, adjustment to the local culture, and friendships were often dominant factors in the success or frustrations of the year abroad. Some groups formed a strong bond, some even continuing to stay in touch and have reunions after fifty years. In other cases, groups split into factions while abroad. One year, a group in Varanasi became so divided that a carpenter was hired to cut the dining table into two parts so that the two factions could sit at separate tables for meals.

The role of the monitor was to nurture an atmosphere in which students felt supported by, or at the very least tolerated, each other. Because the CYIP was a national recruiting program, students came from across the U.S. Some were from large public universities, others from small elite private colleges. Differences among the participants were as wide as at any higher educational institution in the U.S. But while in India, there weren’t other groups to join. And the monitors found that year to year, the tone of a group could be vastly different than the year before or the group of which they had been a part when they were a student on the program.

During his first year as monitor, John wrote: “We have …had a few students with homesickness, but the group is very supportive of each other. As a group, the students are all very individualistic and have taken initiative to experience Benares on their own, yet at the same time they can come together as a close-knit group.” One student in particular had numerous bouts of homesickness and had difficulty adjusting to conditions in Benares. John noted she was a “solid member of our group” and that her fellow students supported her as she decided to stay for the entire year instead of returning early to the U.S.

This became very important when a female student was sexually harassed by one of her university instructors. The male as well as female students rallied around their fellow student to support her as I sought a resolution. The teacher had invited the student into his office and then
took her hand and kissed it, touched her leg, and told her he loved her. The student then refused to attend the class which was the basis for her student visa. John strove to support the student while also appreciating the cultural context, he wrote: “Knowing how this issue of sexual harassment is still very concealed here [in India in 1995] makes the situation more difficult.”

With regard to these two situations as well as others, John organized regular group discussions, often around the group meal held at the Bhavan (program center). These sessions allowed the students to voice concerns and to work through issues as a group. They could feel safe voicing their experiences and hear the perspectives/experiences of their peers.

During this second year, the group dynamics were influenced by other factors. John wrote in his final report: “As I have known groups from seven years-worth of programs, I know that each year is unique and always has its eccentric characters. This year was no exception.” The eccentricity to which he referred during this year was abuse of alcohol by two students. “I regret that they effected the whole closeness of the group and our ability to work together. The family atmosphere at the Bhavan was not strong.’ The group that year consisted of 8 women and six men. The behaviour of these two men, including the use of language others found offensive made many in the group and particularly the female students uncomfortable. John went on to note that students had productive years academically and enjoyed life in Benares, but it was without the benefit of the support from a cohesive group.

Money matters

The budget for the College Year in India depended on two sources, fees from the students paid to the University of Wisconsin and funds from federal grants. For almost every year of the program’s almost sixty-year history, Professor Elder annually submitted grants to the federal government. He was determined to keep the program as cost effective for students as possible.
Both the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the federal government had rules about allowable items to fund and also had reporting requirements. The monitors, many managing a budget for the first time, had a lot to learn.

At the beginning of each year, a monitor would collect the federal funds in New Delhi, deposit them in a bank account and distribute pre-assigned amounts to the other sites. Since the Varanasi monitor usually entered India through New Delhi, the task usually fell to the monitor from this site. During John’s years the funds were disbursed to him in year one through the USEFI office and in year two directly from the Embassy.

Each monitor had a bank account for program funds in the city in which they were resident for the term of the program. Transfers were made and received through these local accounts. The local account was typically transferred to succeeding monitors, sometimes quite efficiently. In John’s case, it took the better part of three years to close out the account from his year so funds could be transferred to a successor monitor.

The monitors distributed stipends to the students. During John’s years there was a large change in the exchange rate between the U.S. dollar and the Indian rupee. Some students asked if their stipends couldn’t be adjusted but John had to explain to them that the University exchanged funds at the beginning of the year and so rate changes during the year were protected but benefits from favorable rate changes did not result in increase in their stipends.

During John’s years, he also negotiated salary increases for local staff taking into account local inflation rates, arranged for the purchase of computers and an email system for a program house computer, facilitated an honorarium for a long term-staff person who retired, made sure he stayed within the budget, and provided monthly reports to the accounting staff in Madison.

Monitor meetings
A practice started in the 1980s of having monitor meetings during the spring term. The monitors would get together and share their experiences, discuss how problems were solved, and made suggestions for program improvement, both for the summer orientation and the year in India. John wrote: Overall, I found the meeting a very helpful exercise and it has given me a lot of perspective on my work here. I think we came up with a lot of useful suggestions for future years of the program.” The section titles of a report compiled by Mary Rader gives a sense of the range of topics covered at the 1995 meeting:

- Academic Issues: fieldwork, fieldwork assistants, tutorials, language classes
- Student Concerns: Orientation materials, stipends, food, housing policy, medical, sexual harassment, return airfare
- Monitor concerns: Training and orientations, monitor-student relationships, monitor salary
- Staff concerns: resident coordinators, program house staff

And in conclusion wrote: “If nothing else, we provided each other with some moral support and knowing ears to listen.”

With their evaluation of the sites fresh in their minds, the monitors were the ones who noted that times were changing. Instead of students sending telegrams to their families for urgent matters only, they were now expecting email that would allow them almost instant contact. And so the programs had to think about how to provide access for students whether through a local partner or equipment bought by the program for the program center. Locations that housed local restaurants and tea stalls were in some cases being replaced with pizza shops. Housing was becoming more expensive as landlords had more experience with scholars who had large stipends a, small homes were replaced with expensive hotels, and travelers willing to pay a higher rent. Travel once dominated by bicycles and bicycle rickshaws with an occasional motorized scooter or taxi now
competed with three-wheel motorized scooters, many motorbikes, and cars. Informing the administrators in the U.S. about these changes fostered rethinking of the budget, orientation materials and refreshed the program.

Conclusion

The College Year in India program was fortunate to have the dedicated service of the monitors over the years. In 2005, responding to changes including a desire for a period of more year-to-year continuity of staffing for the program and the increasing availability of Indian scholars who had experience with the American educational system and American students, the program ended the pattern of hiring monitors hand hired local coordinators for the program.
Section 3. Impact of the CYIP Experience on Students

The student experience with the CYIP began with preparation before departure. As the faculty and administrators overseeing the program learned more about the student experience, more and varied orientation materials and sessions were developed.

CYIP Orientation Materials

The College Year in India Program provided very little systematic orientation for the students during the summer of 1961. During the summer of 1962 Joe Elder and his family were preparing to leave their house for a year and had their own packing to arrange and travel documents to prepare. At some point the students ate with their right hands, learned about the importance of safe drinking water, and were given information about squat toilets and water-rinse procedures. Knowing about eating with their hands was important because shortly after arriving in India the students would face meals while provided with no eating utensils. Knowing about the right-hand left-hand distinctions was important. Throughout India the left hand was “contaminated,” because the left hand and water were used to rinse the rectum after defecation. Most toilets in India would be squat toilets accompanied by no toilet paper and only a vessel to contain water. Since the left hand was “contaminated,” one could use only one's right hand for eating. One must also use one's right hand to give objects to other people including cash to shopkeepers and rikshaw-wallas. The students would need this information from their first days in India.

During the 1962-63 academic year, Joe and his family lived in Lucknow on a research fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies. University of Wisconsin-Madison authorities had also asked him to supervise the India program. Joe met the students when they arrived in Delhi's Palam airport. On a bus provided by the Delhi School of Social Work, he traveled with the Program students to their quarters in Jamia Millia Islamia and the Delhi University campus. He later visited the Program students in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) where BHU Professor Dr. A.K. Narain and
University of Wisconsin-Madison professor Dick Robinson were looking after them.

No sooner had Joe “settled” the students and returned to Lucknow than problems emerged on all three campuses – problems with living conditions, classes, health, and program expectations. Among some students, unhappiness was running high. One student returned to the United States. Professor Henry Hart arranged for Marianne McManus, a professional University of Wisconsin-Madison campus counselor, to fly to India to interview the students. She had earlier interviewed some of the students in Madison and had provided input on several of their selections. After arriving in India, she interviewed most of the Delhi students before becoming ill herself and leaving India early. Winter break came and went, and discontent continued. Students were now conducting their fieldwork projects and were facing new unexpected problems. It became clear to Joe that the Program needed to provide students with a realistic picture of what they were going to experience when they studied to India.

The trigger to providing this realistic picture came when one of the students wrote to Joe, as she was preparing to leave India, that she had either “wasted” or “lost” a year of her education by coming to India. In Joe's reply he tried to explain that she had not “lost” a year. He contrasted what she had learned about learning in India with what she thought she was learning in the neatly packaged classes in the United States. Shortly thereafter he wrote a letter to the group of students back in Madison whom Henry Hart and Dick Robinson had selected to study language during the 1963 summer in preparation for their coming year in India. Someone in Madison arranged to have Joe's letter reproduced in purple “ditto” and distributed to the 1963 summer students.

The letter was titled “An Open Letter” and was addressed to “All 1963-64 Participants in the Undergraduate-Year-in-India Program” from “Joe Elder, 1962-63 Program Coordinator, Lucknow, U.P., India.” The letter began: “Namaste, Welcome to the Undergraduate-Year-in-India Program. Welcome to one of the toughest, most frustrating years you have ever experienced. Welcome, also, I hope, to one of the richest, most meaningful years of your lives.”

The 14-page letter explained that the students were part of a University of Wisconsin
experiment to see if it was possible “to establish a successful undergraduate training program for Americans in India.” The letter asked the following questions, “Can language training be done as effectively in India as in the United States? Can intellectually challenging courses be found? Can American students apply themselves to academic work without the continual prodding built into the American academic framework? Can fieldwork supervisors be found who will provide the right balance of direction and flexibility? Can American students survive and benefit from the psychological adjustment demanded by the Indian setting?” The letter went on to say, “We who have been working with this program think that the answer to all these questions is “Yes.” During this coming year, you will be the ones who will provide us with the actual answer to these questions.”

The letter continued: “From what we have observed during the past two years, much of how you survive this coming year depends on you yourself. India is here, with its heritage, its inefficiency and its problems. There is not much that any of us can do to change it and make it less demanding or more palatable, at least within the immediate future. Some of our previous students have found this complex of elements comprising India to be fun, exciting, challenging, and intellectually stimulating. Other students have taken this same complex and found it demoralizing, depressing, and overwhelming. The complex remained the same. What was different was the outlook of the students.”

“Since so much seems to depend on the outlook, and since outlook is something that can be shaped by previous information, let me try in these pages to provide some of the information I wish I could have provided to all of last year's participants. I couldn't provide this information a year ago, because at that time none of us knew. We have learned a considerable amount during the months, and I believe the program will be better for it.”

The letter went on to provide “Official” information: “In India you are going to be foreigners. This means that you must register with the Foreigners Registration Office of the district in which you are residing within seven days of your arrive [sic.] in India (be sure to have plenty of passport-size photographs with you; two dozen are not too many to have on hand). Like most contacts with
government offices, the process of registration will probably require three visits on three consecutive
days; so, don't wait till the last minute. The Foreigners' Registration form will notify you of all the
other rules you must follow as a foreigner. The rules are not too cumbersome; and it's a good idea to try
to follow them. When it is time to leave India, you will have to obtain a 'No Objection to Leave India'
certificate from this same Foreigners' Registration Office.”

The letter then described the “Academic” program. “This is an academic program. It is being
directed by college professors. And you are receiving academic credit for the work you take in India.
Whether or not this program continues depends on whether we can make it sufficiently sound
academically to justify the cooperation American colleges and universities have given to it... If there
was one point we did not stress sufficiently for last year's students before they came to India, it was
this.” A that point there was no guarantee that US colleges and universities would accept the grades and
credits assigned by the University of Wisconsin to work graded by non-UW faculty in India.

The “Open Letter” announced “There are three parts to your academic load in India: 1) language study, 2) optional course selected from the University's M.A. syllabus, and 3) an independent fieldwork project, conducted under the supervision of some member you select from the university or other approved institution staff … within this framework, there will be minor variations on the three campuses [the Delhi School of Social Work, Banaras Hindu University, and Osmania University in Hyderabad].” The letter spelled out some of the differences on each campus.

The letter then said, “A word about the optional courses you will be selecting from the University syllabus (forewarned is forearmed). Most likely your first reaction to your first class will be, “Where do I go to drop this course?” Many of the 1962-63 students found the lectures boring, disorganized, or focused on exam-answer preparation. In the Indian academic system, based on the British academic system, classes' goals involved preparing students to write successful end-of-the-year exams. In some classes professors dictated word-for-word answers that had been successful on previous exams. Professors who encouraged in-class discussions or critical thinking contributed little to
their students reproducing from memory successful answers on their final exams.

The Letter continued, “Before you rush off to drop the course … ask yourself if you are interested in the content of the course.” If so, “make a note of all the books listed as relevant in the syllabus (usually ten or fifteen titles are given). Then get those books and read them … By the end of the year … I'll wager you will have gotten more out of the course – basically on your own – than you could have gotten by depending on even a good professor to pre-slice and serve the morsels of subject matter to you. Furthermore, you will have begun to learn how to learn on your own – and this is perhaps as crucial an academic lesson as any we could ever teach you.”

The “Open Letter” provided three pages of “Medical” information. It advised students to be careful about eating exposed or raw foods and drinking unsafe water and urged them to boil the water or use iodine water-purification tablets. It encouraged students to maintain a balanced diet and care for their personal hygiene (with instructions about consistent left-hand avoidance if students chose to use their left hands for toilet purposes). And it urged students to see a doctor when they were ill. “Once you're sure you're sick, see a reliable doctor.” “There is nothing 'heroic' in waiting four or five days to see if you're really sick.” The “Open Letter” also gave contact information for quality medical facilities in the three locations.

The “Open Letter” then came to the section titled “Outlook.” “This year you are going to be pushed to your limits. … Why? I can't tell you why in each case, but I can tell you some of the reasons why others have felt that way. For one thing, you enjoy efficiency …Well, you're not going to get efficiency – either from yourself or from anyone around you. … For another thing, you enjoy being able to predict (within limits) what's going to happen. Well, you're not going to get this either. People will make an appointment with you, and then nobody will turn up. You'll go to the library and discover that no books are being released because they're taking inventory, or you'll go to class only to discover that today's a holiday … Or you're attending a group picnic, only to discover that you're being called upon to sing an American song, do an American dance, or otherwise to entertain the gathering.
Repeatedly the rug is going to be pulled out from under you...“

“For still another thing, you enjoy long, introspective discussions about the meaning of life, the evolution of yourself as an entity, your deepest desires, and so on, and you enjoy the people who can discuss these things with you. Well, you're not going to find many people who even know how to discuss things the same way.” The U.S. highly individualized conversations are not widespread throughout the world.

“For another thing, you enjoy coeducational company ... Well, that too has pretty much ended … you girls will perhaps be under special stress. As a result of Hollywood's traditional fare, many Indian males view American girls as both accessible and oversexed ... My general suggestion is that you watch how the Indian girls protect themselves and do likewise. Both saris and silvar [sic] kamizes protect most of the body from male gazes. Be “modest” when you speak with men – “namaste” instead of shaking hands ...The “Open Letter” went on to say “you enjoy being left alone occasionally... Well, you can be pretty sure that you're not going to get very much of this during the coming year. From the moment you arrive, you are going to be an object of curiosity.”

“Finally, you enjoy the feeling of having made a contribution...of leaving things a bit better than you found them.... However, I don't think you're going to have very much of that feeling to enjoy during this next year ... If you give to beggars, you're going to have the nagging suspicion that basically you haven't helped anything at all. Tomorrow they'll just be begging again. If you don't give to beggars, you'll be alarmed at your own callousness (and you'll perhaps be secretly irritated with India for having made you so callous). If you ride on a cycle rickshaw, you'll feel guilty about being carried about by another man's sweat. If you don't ride on a cycle rickshaw, you'll be depriving the rickshaw-walla of his means of livelihood, and heaven help you when you try to decide what a fair price is for a ride … Whatever you do, you can think of reasons why you shouldn't have done it.”

What should Program students do about these frustrations? The Letter suggested “a combination of (1) doing what you can to change things, and (2) accepting what cannot be changed.”
“About the inefficiency, the Letter suggested doing most things oneself. “Rather than taking [people] up on their various offers of assistance, thank them all profusely, borrow, rent, or buy a bike and strike out on your own. Chances are that you'll get your ream of typing paper much quicker, your train reservation much more correctly, and your permit from the office much more expeditiously on your own – and you'll have a lot more fun doing it – than if you depend on others to do it for you.”

“About the frustration of being unable to predict what's going to happen,” the Letter suggested that “you always carry with you a paperback edition of some book you want to read. Then when the class is canceled, the appointment not kept, or the library closed, you won't have that feeling of wasting time. I've completed a number of worthwhile books in just this manner. In fact, during the exciting portions of the book I've sometimes hoped that there will be some unexpected change in plans so that I can get on with my reading ... As far as being able to sing, dance or do magic tricks at a student picnic, my best suggestion would be forget the fact that you've no voice or that you twist like a giraffe ... It's more important that you join in the spirit of the occasion ...”

“About your frustration at not being able to have introspective discussions with your Indian classmates,” the Letter suggested “try talking about what they can discuss. Get them off on their families, on how they arrange their marriages, on how they finance one another through school, or what they do when disaster strikes – when a mother and/or father dies, on the changes going on within their own families between what their grandparents think, their parents think, or what they themselves think. Family life in India is a rich, ever-changing fabric.”

“About the frustration about not having coeducational company,” the Letter suggested getting to know some families. “Get to know the mother and grandmother – as well as the 'sister.' Or get to know the father or grandfather – as well as the 'brother.' Within the family circle you'll find many of the qualities you'll miss in the wider society – a sense of service and self-sacrifice, a type of “civic” responsibility, a code of honor, a type of looking after the weaker one and of fair play. “

“About your frustration at lack of privacy,” the Letter suggested this was just one of those
things you'll have to put up with. “...If the lack of privacy really begins to get you, plan a weekend in Simla, Nainital, or Darjeeling, or in some of the hill spots near Hyderabad. Once there, go for a long quiet walk by yourself and enjoy India as seen from a mountain top with nothing to disturb you but the slow-circling hawk or the ever-present little squirrels ... it's a balm for the soul. “

“About your frustrations at being unable to contribute very much to the solutions of 'India's vast problems,' the Letter suggested there were two ways to tackle the problem “ For one thing there are projects in which you can participate during your holidays that might give you a sense of helping out a bit … albeit you yourselves will see how small that bit really is in contrast with the enormous problems that require action more drastic and far-reaching than work camps, seminars, orphanages, and schools... For another thing, perhaps you can view this entire year in India as a step toward the day when you can do something significant to help India. You will be a lot more effective on your second or third trip to India … you'll know the language. You'll know your way around.... And knowing this, you'll be far better able to come up with something lasting and beneficial on a large scale. Even if you never return to India again, perhaps the greatest contribution you make will be to serve as a window through which your colleagues, neighbors, and relatives obtain a glimpse of India, what India is, and what India is trying to do.”

The “Open Letter” then turned to the students' relationships with each other. “(D)uring this past year I was occasionally dismayed at how the program participants had not learned to learn together. The strain began during the summer of language training, with people belittling those who were dropping behind the others in the class, and with those who were weaker in the language refusing to experiment with the language in the presence of those who were better. This belittling continued even after the group arrived in India. Participants ran each other's attempts down to come to terms with India. They told each other what they ought to wear, how much they ought to study, what they ought to eat, and how they ought to eat it. They continued to interpret one person's success as somehow a failure for the rest of them. They couldn't seem to accept the validity of a variety of different approaches to
India. And most of them weren't able to enjoy the experience of learning about India through one another's eyes.”

The “Open Letter” then speculated: “Perhaps this spirit of competitiveness, this keeping of information to oneself, this running down the attempts of classmates is something bred into us by our American approach to learning. If so, see if you can shelve it for a year. There are too many ways of approaching India for anyone of us to say that his is the only way or the right way. What is quite right for you may be quite wrong for someone else. There is too much to learn for any of you to be able to afford shutting your eyes to the insights of others. Each one of you will be working on his or her own research project and coming to terms with India in his or her own individual way. Each one of you can provide another window through which all of you can try to figure out what makes this mighty land of India tick. It's a fascinating puzzle. As you search for the answers, you'll acquire a type of perspective on yourself and your own civilization that you couldn't have gotten had you remained on an American campus. It's a type of perspective that this tired old world of ours could use a lot more of.”

With minor modifications, the Program provided the “Open Letter” to every student who subsequently went to India (and later also to Nepal). Students often shared the “Open Letter” with their parents, Throughout the years parents and relatives commented appreciatively about the information and realistic tone of the “Open Letter.”

Joe Elder titled a second orientation letter he wrote in 1966 “The Emotional Cycle.” In it Joe predicted how students' would feel month-by-month throughout their year (e.g., in September they would be thrilled by actually speaking the language they had studied all summer, and they would be frustrated by how extremely limited their language skills were; in January they would be panicked by how little time was left and at how much they had to do to complete their fieldwork projects). At the end of the year Bob Holmes sent Joe a photograph of the Osmania students in a circle pointing accusingly at a bike on the ground with Bob's comment “Osmania students destroy cycle of the year.” The Osmania students apparently resented being told how they were going to feel month by month.
“The Emotional Cycle,” even though it contained some truth, was soon dropped from the orientation materials.

From the start, students at each site wrote “Location Reports” for the benefit of students succeeding them. The 1962-63 Delhi students began their Report with “Delhi is a city of superlatives. It is the poorest lit of any capital in the world. It is the biggest village in north India. Its power and water supply are the least predictable of any major Indian city. Its government is the least noticeable, and its confusion is most pandemonic.” The Banaras location Report stated “Banaras is the ancient holy city of India. Because it is located on the banks of the Ganges which according to legend flows from the hair of Lord Shiva, it is the sacred city of the Hindus who come from near and far to bathe and to die here.”

The 1964-65 Hyderabad students began their Report with “For the student of India, Hyderabad is an excellent place to begin grasping real India, for its mid-country location and its history have drawn on India's variation and created a pied city, a taste of North and South ...”

The extensive “Location Reports” (the Hyderabad “Location Report” was 20 pages long) gave detailed information about hostel life, the student mess, places to study, prices for buses, rickshaws, and scooters, navigating post offices, places to shop, how much to pay tailors, where to eat, and where to take excursions. One “Location Report” advised students to “accept, accept, accept.”

When Bob Holmes met his first batch of program students in Berkeley during the summer of 1964, he had few orientation materials other than the three “Location Reports” and Joe Elder's “Open Letter.” Two summers later, when the rotating language training was being conducted on the University of Chicago campus, Bob Holmes provided the program students with a large binder of orientation materials. Gordon Roadarmel's “Cultural Cues and Clues for the American in India” came first, with its sections on “Purity and Pollution,” “Women in India,” “Friendship and Hospitality,” and “Respect and Status.” Roadarmel's article ended with “Some Americans in India, when faced with particularly awkward situations, have found it helpful to say, 'I'm sorry, that's not our custom.' Indians appreciate the importance of custom. In general, however, your stay will be happier if some of those
patterns of behavior do become your custom while you are in India.”. The orientation-materials binder included a 31-page “Guide to Health:” adapted from the Peace Corps that included information about diseases like plague and yellow fever that did not exist in India. The orientation materials included Joe Elder’s “Open Letter” and “The Emotional Cycle,” and the Delhi, Banaras, and Hyderabad “Location Reports.”

When those 1966 summer students arrived in India, they received a small, printed-in-India Handbook by Bob Holmes beginning with “Welcome to India! You've made it. Congratulations!” The Handbook contained detailed information about the three campuses and their directors, police-registration regulations, train travel, student stipends, bicycles, and bedding, Christmas vacation, and the end-of-the-year conference during which every student would present a project report. The cover of the Handbook stated, “You are bound by the regulations herein.”

After Professor Dan Matson of the Indian Studies Department became involved in the College Year in India Program, he contributed to the orientation materials a thoughtful essay titled “The Cultural Aspects of Cleanliness: Eating and So Forth.” Dan wrote, “... in terms of cultural behavior, 'clean' means 'clean enough,' and every culture and subculture is free to enforce its culture-bound concept. And part of living successfully in a foreign culture is getting to understand, appreciate, and operate within the framework of its cleanliness rules.” Dan described regional differences within India in dining customs, use of number of fingers when eating, and appropriate ways of passing food to others. Years later a student who studied Muslims in Hyderabad added a paragraph describing how Muslims insert prayers at certain points before and during their meals.

Dan was particularly graphic when describing how to use Indian toilets. He provided hand-drawn illustrations of urban, rural, and train latrines – with explanations for how to use them properly. Condemning “the evils of toilet paper in India,” Dan described seeing children defecate over an open sewer using a container of water and their left hand. Dan's advice was “join the crowd... For a short time afterward, you'll feel a little water trickling down between your legs that wouldn't do in America,
hut in India you'll have the company of several hundred million other residents to make you feel better about it, and very soon you won't even notice it anymore.”

Most College Year participants, applying as college sophomores, had written few serious research papers in their lives, and had never gathered data by interviews. Bob Holmes prepared a list of completed fieldwork projects through 1964, including a list of suggestions for possible future projects. Joe Elder, drawing on his sociology background, wrote a 12-page manual titled “On Doing a Fieldwork Project.” It described what students should do during their pre-departure summer. If they were in Madison, they should look at some of the fieldwork projects former Program students had done. They should select several tentative research topics for themselves, and they should develop related hypotheses. The manual urged students, after arriving in India, not to wait to get started on their fieldwork projects and to move quickly selecting their fieldwork advisers. The manual describes ways of organizing record-keeping and reviewed various forms of recording interviews including taping them. It addressed problems of translation and issues of field assistants. For students wanting to use fixed-question interviews, the manual provided examples of clear and unclear fixed-questions.

The manual ended by suggesting a typical table of contents for the final project report: “1. Acknowledgments (be generous, it's cheap, and people appreciate it). 2. The Problem (what you chose to study and why). 3. Definition of Terms (how you chose to define --- and operationalize – whatever it was you were studying). 4. The Methodology (why you chose your research strategy, what fieldwork techniques you used, and why). 5. Limitations of your Methodology (there are no perfect ways to get information; you are in the best position to identify your own shortcomings). 6. Your Findings (the heart of your Report). 7. Conclusions (how your findings relate back to the Problem you chose). 8, Suggestions for further research (an important part of your legacy to future generations of College Year participants ...”

From the early years the Program required students to prepare four typed-and-bound copies of their fieldwork reports. The Program paid for the typing and binding. Students often had their own
names and project titles printed in gold on the black covers. The Program kept two copies of each fieldwork report – one to remain in the local Program House in India and one to send to Madison. Students kept one copy for themselves. The fourth copy went to the student's fieldwork adviser.

The collection of fieldwork projects in Madison rapidly increased. For a time, the Program housed the fieldwork projects in reading room 1322 Van Hise Hall. Joe Elder prepared an “Index to College-Year-in-India Fieldwork Projects” arranged topically and alphabetically (beginning with Archaeology, Architecture, Art/Craft, Buddhism, Christianity … and ending with Science/Medicine, Sociology/Anthropology, Textiles, Women's Studies, and Zoology. By 2010 the Index was 21 pages long. Early each summer the Program provided the new students with copies of the Index and urged them to look through the Index to get ideas for their fieldwork projects when they got to India. The Program also urged students to visit room 1322 Van Hise and look at earlier projects. Years later, the Memorial Library found space for all the fieldwork projects in a special room. During the summer the library opened the room at designated times so College Year students could refer to former fieldwork projects.

Over the years students wrote additional orientation materials that were included in the Handbook. Michele Garfield from Madurai in her “The Rocky Road to Research” wrote “always keep a journal.” Second-generation students from India wrote about the challenges of balancing Program responsibilities against Indian relatives' expectations. A Banaras female student of Indian descent wrote, “One of the funniest parts of living in Banaras has been walking down the street; looking for all the world like an innocent little Indian girl and knowing the whole while that inside lurks a miniskirted ‘American chick’. (hee, hee). Talk about living, breathing contradictions – that's me. Don't get me wrong; the 'little girl' is as much a part of me as the 'chick'. The latter has just gone underground for a while.”

College-Year-in-India women wrote and revised “Being Female in India: From Those of Us Who Have Been There.” The article began with “This is no fun-in-the-sun-in-the-exotic east type
Program. You are going to have to adjust to a culture where expectations of what a woman should be are different from those to which you are accustomed. You will be made aware of your speech, body language, beliefs, ways of thinking, and assumptions, because they will contrast so sharply with those of the people around you.” A footnote reminded readers that “Not all Indian women are traditional in all aspects of their lives. Some of them drive scooters, wear slacks, hold jobs, and even become Prime Minister. However, the traditional is still the norm for most Indian women in most areas of their lives.”

The “Being Female ...” article addressed such questions as “What Should I Wear?” “What Can I Do If I Am Hassled?” “What Are Some Definite Don'ts?” (Don't go to the movies alone and rule out the 9 PM to midnight show.) “Isn't This Another Example of Women Being Forced to Bow to Male Intimidation? Aren't You Asking Me to Compromise Myself?” (Yes, quite frankly, we are. Maybe a better word would be 'to adapt' yourself … If you refuse to bend, you will only emphasize your foreignness and make life difficult, not only for yourself, but for the other students and the Monitor as well. Just a rationalization? Maybe.).

Babette Lightner, a Madurai monitor, in her “Some Thoughts on Being Sick in India” wrote, “Getting sick is probably the hardest part of living in India... When someone gets sick: 1. Take care of his/her immediate needs. 2. INFORM YOUR MONITOR. 3. Take the student to a reliable doctor if it seems necessary. i.e., if the student has a high fever, serious diarrhea, vomiting, or loss of consciousness … it is important for a healthy person to accompany a sick person [when going to a doctor]...”

The Program added to the Handbook an abbreviated section on “Health Tips in Asia.” Joe Elder began this section with “Prevention is the name of the game.” The “Health Tips” described the symptoms and causes of the most common diseases students experienced including simple diarrhea, bacillary dysentery, amoebic dysentery, giardia, infectious hepatitis, parasite worms, and malaria. The “Health Tips” included standard prescriptions for those diseases. The “Health Tips” also included instructions for preparing oral rehydration solutions to replace liquid loss from diarrhea. The Office of
International Studies and Programs added a section titled “Health and Safety Notes” beginning with a discussion of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. A participant in the 1994-95 College Year in India Program in Banaras added an article titled “Homosexuality and Homosexual Behavior in India.” The author described his frightening experience in Calcutta’s Maiden Park when police arrested him for “talking with a homosexual.” His article included a list of gay and lesbian groups in different Indian cities. Steve Lindquist, 1996-1998 Monitor in Banaras began an article titled “Computers in India” with the statement: “Computers are available for your use at most Program Houses (you will have keys to your Program House and the computer room).” The article warned “There is no tech support phone line ... Anything that goes wrong is your problem.”

Melissa Maley, the 1998-99 Monitor in Hyderabad, wrote “Courtesy in India.” Her piece began with “Everything in India is different. Nothing will make sense. No one will make sense (even if they're speaking English). It is up to you to learn how to understand the people around you, and that understanding will not necessarily be reciprocal. Cultivating this understanding will require patience, self-reflection, and occasional leaps of faith.” Her article continued “[The Program House] is a home of sorts in which you should clean up after yourself, put books back in the library, keep the computers free of dust and clutter … and turn off lights, fans, and computers which suck precious energy from an energy-deprived country. And in the end, don't take [out] your frustration with India (or your research, your landlord, or the kid who threw a rock at you) on your fellow American students.”

By 2000-2001 the 98-page Handbook had become the College Year in India and College Year in Nepal students’ encyclopedia. It began with: “Namaste (Nepali, Hindi), Tashi Delek (Tibetan), Namaskaramandi (Telugu), Vannakam (Tamil), Adabarz (Urdu),” and the first portion of Joe Elder's decades-old “Open Letter.” The Handbook listed the Madison summer orientation staff, Madison contact information, the names of students on all three India campuses and the Nepal campus, city maps of Banaras, Madurai, Hyderabad, and Kathmandu, information about transcripts, credits, tutorial policies, and grades, health-insurance instructions, travel-plan options, financial aid, payment
schedules, withdrawal policy, and summer schedules for orientation sessions, inoculations, and the showing of documentary films. The cover of the Handbook announced: “Important Information Enclosed. Read Thoroughly, Bring to your Site-Specific Orientation and Take Abroad With You.”

**CYIP Orientation Sessions**

Between 1962 and 1972 the Consortium for Interinstitutional Cooperation-sponsored South Asia summer language-training program moved from campus to campus for the first decade of the CYIP program.*


The College Year in India Program arranged for the up-coming faculty director to visit that summer's campus – even briefly – for meetings with students and group orientation sessions. During the summer of 1964 Joe Elder joined Bob Holmes in Berkeley for an orientation session that included eating Indian food with right hands. On one occasion a Hindi student sang a song to the tune of “C'est sera sera” with the words “kele kaise hai” ('how are the bananas?”). The song lamented the fact that after weeks of Hindi training all he could ask was how were the bananas (taken from Lesson One of John J. Gumperz and June Rumery *Conversational Hindi-Urdu*).

During the 1961-1971 decade, the Peace Corps trained batches of India volunteers on the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee campus and hired Joe and other University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty to drive to Milwaukee for evening lectures on India. One day Joe received a phone call from one of the Milwaukee Peace Corps trainers. A batch of volunteers to whom Joe had lectured had arrived in India, started their work, triggered an angry cultural confrontation with their Indian co-workers, and had been told to leave India. The Peace Corps trainer told Joe that a new batch of
volunteers had come to Milwaukee. Could Joe do something when he met with this group to avoid a similar cultural confrontation in India?

In Milwaukee, Joe learned details of the confrontation. The Peace Corps group had been assigned to a hospital in India. The volunteers were partnered with Indian hospital staff and provided living quarters in the hospital compound. On one occasion a Peace Corps volunteer returned late to find the hospital compound gate locked and the watchman nowhere in sight. She climbed over the gate and returned to her quarters not knowing she had been seen. In the morning the head nurse summoned her and threatened to send her back to the United States. On another night an elderly patient defecated over himself and his bedding. The Indian nurse partner advised the Peace Corps volunteer to leave the patient till the morning staff arrived to clean him up. The Peace Corps volunteer ignored the advice and cleaned the patient herself. Her Indian nurse partner reported the incident to the head nurse. The head nurse reprimanded the Peace Corps volunteer. On both occasions the other Peace Corps volunteers rallied around their colleague. This led to an angry confrontation and the entire Peace Corps group being told to leave India.

Joe converted these two stories into two role-playing scenarios. Later that day, in the training session, he asked for a volunteer to join him. Joe read the role-playing scenario describing the sequence of events (climbing the hospital gate, cleaning up the patient). Joe then played the role of the head nurse confronting the volunteer. Very quickly the role playing became emotional, In each case the volunteer found the charges unreasonable, challenged them, and refused to apologize. Joe, as the head nurse, became angrier and angrier at the volunteers' insolence and insubordination. In each case the role-playing ended with Joe announcing, as head nurse, that he would request the government of India to tell the Peace Corps group to leave India.

The discussion that followed was unlike anything Joe had seen in his earlier Peace Corps lectures. The volunteers were thoroughly engaged. Fairly harsh words were exchanged. Cultural stereotypes emerged. Volunteers differed on what they thought should be done. Nonetheless, they all
agreed that being told to leave India was not a good outcome. What could be done to avoid it?

Joe decided to adapt his Peace Corps role-playing experience to the College Year in India orientation program. He prepared a role-playing scenario in which a Program student failed to meet the deadline for registering with the Foreigners Registration office and was facing Government-of-India eviction from India. In another role-playing scenario a Program student faced a fieldwork adviser whom the student had ignored for so many months the adviser was about to submit a failing grade for the entire yet-unwritten fieldwork report. In another role-playing scenario, a female Program student had inadvertently led a neighborly older shopkeeper to think she was romantically interested in him. He invites her to an isolated picnic site where she assumed his family would be meeting them.

Joe Elder tested these scenarios with the 1967 summer students in Urbana, Illinois. The scenarios sparked real tensions between Joe, playing the Indian, and the Program student volunteer playing the Program student. Each scenario generated lively discussions with often sharp disagreement about what the student should or should not do or say. Professor Russell Smart, the 1967-68 faculty coordinator, in his end-of-the-year report, wrote that the students that year had particularly praised the “psychodrama sessions” the preceding summer in Urbana, Illinois. From that point on, the role-playing scenarios became a regular part of the Wisconsin summer orientation sessions.

In time, Joe developed two more role-playing scenarios. In one, the Program student had become such a benefactor to the host family that when the end-of-the-year departure time arrived, the host family requested embarrassing and unprecedented financial help. In the other scenario, a well-spoken young man approached the Wisconsin student for urgently needed financial help to address an immediate personal crisis. These two scenarios required Program students to think about the economic disparities they would experience in India as “rich Americans.”

An unexpected problem arose during the 1968 summer session in East Lansing, Michigan. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Program students were housed on an upper floor of a high-rise dormitory. Dormitory rules prohibited alcohol and pets. Joe Elder, who was in Madison, heard
unexpectedly from a Michigan State housing authority. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Program students had been observed with a keg of beer on the elevator, and one of the Program students was keeping pets in his room. The Michigan State housing authorities were about to evict all the Program students from the dormitory and put them out on the lawn. Joe Elder and Professor Dan Matson drove all night from Madison, Wisconsin to East Lansing. Next morning, in the high-rise dormitory lounge, they met with the Program students and presented the eviction threat. The students expressed remorse and agreed to observe the dormitory rules. One of the students made a short speech and passed around a loaf of bread to share. Later that day Joe Elder and Dan Matson described to the Michigan State housing authorities their meeting with the students. The Michigan State housing authorities allowed the Wisconsin students to continue living in the high-rise dormitory for the remainder of the summer session.

Madison hosted the CIC South Asia language training during the summers of 1965 and 1971. Both summers provided opportunities for regular weekly orientation sessions. On the first Friday evening of both summer sessions, Program students gathered in the Madison Quaker meeting house four blocks from the UW Camp Randall football stadium to eat Indian food with their right hands and to present, before the others, a group performance with their summer-language class. The group performances were rudimentary; the students had completed only the first week of their new language. But practicing for their performances during that first week bonded the classes. During those gatherings, students with performance skills were encouraged to sing, recite, or play some instrument in preparation for possibly being asked to perform in a group setting after they reached India.

In 1972, the summer orientation sessions were held in Chicago. Joe Elder commuted from Madison for several evenings and John Grace coordinated the sessions for thirty students enrolled in Hindi and Telugu classes.

Early in the summer, Joe delivered examples of fieldwork projects for the program students in Chicago to peruse while they thought about their own fieldwork projects. In mid-summer, Joan
Raducha joined the orientation sessions and provided additional information and coordination. After the CYIP was cancelled its 1972-73 program and after it resumed in 1973, the summer orientation and language training were permanently located in Madison.

The 1999 year serves as an example of the shape orientations assumed. In 1999 the 10-week summer session began Monday, June 7. That Friday evening all the students and faculty were invited to an Indian vegetarian picnic organized by Joann Elder in the Quaker Meeting House four blocks from the UW football stadium. The meal was prepared by Joann Elder. After the rice, dal, and watermelon picnic (eaten with one's right hand), each language instructor introduced before the whole group a hastily prepared class presentation showing what could be done with only one week of language training and considerable imagination.

The 1999-2000 Handbook announced that India summer orientation sessions would meet Monday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 in the Memorial Union. The first orientation session introduced seven key Program people on the Madison campus, discussed travel and health-insurance options, presented the inoculation schedule arranged by University Health Services, and circulated sign-up sheets for meetings with Joe Elder to choose three possible fieldwork projects and three possible tutorials.

The next two weeks the orientation sessions focused on fieldwork projects. On June 21 Joe Elder described the wide range of possible fieldwork projects, reviewed the written materials in the Handbook on how to do (and not do) fieldwork projects, circulated topically organized indexes of India fieldwork projects in the Fieldwork Library, and passed around bound copies of various kinds of fieldwork projects. Throughout the summer Melissa Maley, Hyderabad Monitor in 1998-99, opened the Fieldwork Library in room 1332 Van Hise Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Joe urged students to visit the Fieldwork Library, look through previous fieldwork projects, and generate ideas for their own fieldwork projects. On Monday June 28 several former Program students described their fieldwork projects and the unexpected problems they had faced. Their recurrent advice was
“Don't wait to get started.”

Monday evenings July 5 and July 12 students met separately by site with their Varanasi, Hyderabad, or Madurai Monitors (or Directors). They looked at their site maps, discussed possible housing arrangements, learned of their Program-House facilities, and heard about unique opportunities at their site for fieldwork projects and tutorials. For many students, these separate-site meetings provided a sense of “reality” to the year ahead.

The separate-site meetings also provided opportunities to discuss group dynamics at the separate sites. Joan Raducha, by now Associate Dean of International Studies, and Joe Elder wrote scenarios describing past site-specific events.

The Varanasi scenario described how one group of students adapted to India as much as possible (dress, diet, vegetarianism, no toilet paper, willingness to participate in – and even sponsor – Hindu worship services, etc.). Another group of students maintained distinctions between themselves and “India.” Each group criticized the other. Mealtimes became especially unpleasant. Finally, the students “resolved” their problem by having a carpenter cut their table in two and placing the tables at opposite corners of the dining room. The students going to Varanasi were asked to consider alternative “resolutions” to the scenario.

The Madurai scenario described how students quickly disliked the graduate-student monitor and informed her of their dislike. For the rest of the year the monitor and the group maintained minimum contact with each other. The monitor arranged to eat her meals in her own quarters. The students going to Madurai were asked to consider alternative “resolutions” to the scenario.

The Hyderabad scenario described how students bonded with each other during the year, spending increasing amounts of time singing together and reading to each other at the Program House. At the end of the year, they regretted that this had been at the price of having experiences and establishing contacts with Indians outside the Program House. The students going to Hyderabad were asked to consider alternative “resolutions” to the scenario.
The following suggestions accompanied the site-specific scenarios: 1. Rule out criticism of each-others' ideas. 2. When brainstorming, wild ideas often trigger breakthroughs. 3. Combining ideas often improves them. 4. The larger the number of ideas discussed, the better chance of having good ideas.

Monday evening July 19 the three groups met together again to discuss male and female roles in South Asia including differences and similarities between the three India sites. Returned student participants often joined this or other meetings, describing their recent experiences.

The next orientation session was shifted to Tuesday evening July 27 so Dr. Ann Berman could talk to all the students about health care in South Asia. Dr. Berman was uniquely qualified for this talk. She had traveled with her husband and children in India and Nepal and had worked with Tibetan refugees in medical facilities in Dharamsala, India. Many of the students' questions dealt with malaria, malaria-prevention, and the malaria-related recommendations of the US Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia.

The next orientation session in 1999 met on Monday, August 2. The Handbook titled the session “Role Playing: - Anticipating the Unexpected.” Joe Elder read aloud several typical Program-student confrontational situations. Then, with Joe playing the role of the Indian with whom the confrontations occurred and a student volunteer playing the role of the Wisconsin student, the two created dialogues addressing the confrontations. Some of the role-playing dialogues ended quite well (with increased understanding between the student and the fieldwork adviser). Others ended quite badly (with the Foreign Registration officer ordering the student to leave India at once). Others ended with embarrassment (with the Program coed realizing she had inadvertently generated sexual expectations). Each role-playing scenario generated lively discussions.

A 7:30 PM Tuesday film series supplemented the Monday-evening orientation sessions. In the 1999 summer session both films shown the first week of the series had been produced by Wisconsin
students for their fieldwork projects: *Banaras* by Michael Camerini and *Bearing the Heat: Mother Goddess Devotion in South India* by Kristin Oldham. Other documentary films shown that summer produced by Wisconsin students for their fieldwork projects included *Ajuba Dance and Drama Company* by Ron Hess and *Being Muslim in India* by James MacDonald. Throughout the summer students could check out and view VCR versions of most of the orientation films in the Learning Support Services Lab, room 279 Van Hise Hall.

No orientation sessions were held during the last week of the 1999 summer session. Students were told to prepare for their exams and departures. The Handbook announced: “Aug. 12 SUPER THURSDAY 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM. 2nd floor Bascom Hall. Vegetarian pizza, watermelon, and lemonade. Receive passports (with visas), tickets, other travel documents, iodine water purification bottles, miscellaneous parcels to deliver to your overseas sites, and fond farewells.” Students took their language exams Thursday and Friday, August 12 and 13. Before August ended, they were at their sites in Varanasi, Hyderabad, and Madurai, addressing many of the issues raised during the orientation sessions.
Student Survey question # 1

How did you hear about the program?

Responses to this question indicate that learning about the program was sometimes informal and accidental and sometimes planned. Many recollections were vivid with specific details of people, place, and materials. Students often mentioned how finding out about the program helped advance a goal or solve a problem.

Especially in the first years of the program, informal notices like flyers reflected the network of South Asian Faculty across the country encouraging students to study aboard: “I read a mimeographed notice on yellow paper tacked up on a bulletin board near the office of Professor Gordon Fairbanks who ran the Cornell South Asian Language programs.” (1965-66 Delhi program participant). And in another instance, “I saw a small stack of postcards stuck on the wall near the administrative wing. The card (I seem to recall a yellow or cream-colored background with brownish type) advertised the College Year in India Program through the UW-Madison…I hastily took one and sent off immediately for the application.” (1983-84 Varanasi program participant). Written materials in a study-abroad office also introduced students to the program: “I know I was looking into Junior Year Abroad Programs so I may well have gone to the Career Development Office at Smith College where they kept binders of brochures for programs.” (1975-76 Varanasi participant) From the west coast a student wrote that he heard about the program “From a poster that Gene Irshcick taped to the wall on the History Department at CAL in 1984.” (1985-86 Vizakhapatnam participant)

Faculty teaching Hindi, religion, and area-studies courses as well as advisors were a source of information about the program throughout its history. In one case “…after class one day, he [Professor Norman Hein] asked me if I would like to study in India for a year. Apparently, he had
received or seen a notice describing the program.” (1964-65 Varanasi participant). Another student wrote, “Prof. Wulff was the person who first told me about the UW Year in India Program, and she encouraged me to apply.” (1986-87 Madurai participant.) Another student wrote: “I heard about the program through my undergraduate advisor, Wendy Singer. She is a big fan of the UW program in India.” (2004-05 Madurai participant)

In study aboard advising circles, it was always recognized that word of mouth from a fellow student and often from a former satisfied student participant, was a powerful recommendation for a program (though of course, negative comments could also be a strong deterrent.) And in some instances, a recommendation from a fellow student changed the course of a student’s educational direction: “A Midwestern farm boy raised deep in the church, I had grown disenchanted with Yale, except for one course at the Divinity School on the Rig Veda. With its description of divinity in fire and dawn and much more, it spoke to me - a la ‘In rustling grass I hear him pass, He speaks to me everywhere.’ I mentioned to a Divinity school student that I was seriously thinking of dropping out of Yale. He said, ‘don’t do that. He said he could see how I loved studying the Vedas, and that there was a wonderful program through the U Wis that I think he had done (I can’t remember his name!). He encouraged me to do it too. I applied within a week. That saved my college Career.’” (1975-76 Vizakhapatnam participant) In the very first years, recommendations sometimes came from fellow students who simply had seen the notices themselves: “I was made aware of the Wisconsin program when my college roommate, a sociology major, came to our room with the news one winter day in 1963. I was a psychology major, had never had a sociology course, but had done Asian studies whenever I could in high school. Psy [psychology] at Carleton in those days meant running rats.” (1963-64 Delhi participant) Sometimes the source was anonymous: “I was majoring in Cultural Area Studies at the College of Wooster so everyone had heard about the
excellent CYIP program run by the famous Joe Elder.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant) In other cases, a specific past participant recommended the program, as this University of Wisconsin-Madison student who learned about the program “From James MacDonald, who had been on it the previous year and strongly encouraged me to apply and go.” (1970-71 Varanasi participant) Since the CYIP was a national-recruiting program, it drew from private as well as public universities. Many of the liberal arts colleges had robust alumni networks and former participants from those universities frequently recommended the program to successive classes of students: “I heard about the program from Jan Willis, Banaras 1967/68 alum, and my professor at Wesleyan University.” (1980-81 Varanasi participant) Some universities emphasized the importance of a study-abroad experience though it still took a former participant to open a student’s eyes to studying in South Asia: “I was an undergraduate at Kalamazoo College, a small liberal arts college in Michigan that had (still does) a core emphasis on study abroad for all students. While I was scheduled to go to France, I didn’t want to (who knows exactly why now) and in discussing my reluctance to go with the French majors to France, my friend’s boyfriend overheard and he told me about his recent fabulous time on the CYIP program in Nepal. I was hooked.” (1988-89 Madurai participant) A student from the University of Pennsylvania wrote: “I heard about the program from a former student (and monitor) named Monica (sic Monika)… She had been a CYIP Madurai student and monitor…[she] told me about the UW program during the first week of Hindi class, my freshman year.” (1988-89 Varanasi participant) Former participants who then entered the faculty ranks also recommended the program: “I heard about the program from my undergrad advisor, John Cort [a 1973-74 participant], at Denison University.” (2005-06 Varanasi participant) And in some cases it was a matter of chance that the CYIP was brought to someone’s attention: “I was leaving a class taught by Ralph Nicholas at the University of Chicago and happened to overhear Judy Pugh [1966-
67 Varanasi participant] by then already a professor somewhere mention the University of Wisconsin-program…I didn’t waste a second; I called up your office and asked them to send me the application immediately.” (1977-78 Vizakhapatnam participant)

Once established, the program developed a national reputation, and its information was available on the internet: “I became fascinated with India when I was in high school in a small town in TN. I chose to matriculate at UW-Madison, because it had a South Asian studies program and the CYIP.” (1996-97 Hyderabad participant)

But serendipity also brought some students to the program. In the 1960s, study abroad was not as commonplace as it was to become some fifty years later. “I love to read the bulletin boards on the UW campus. During my sophomore year, I saw a special announcement on one of the bulletin boards about the Junior Year in India Program. Prior to that time, I had no plans for a junior year abroad, let alone to India.” (1963-64 Delhi Participant) A student 13 years later related a similar experience: “I had an hour off between classes in the spring of 1976, and wandered into Van Hise, noting that the Junior Year Abroad Office was on some upper floor. I pushed the elevator button and found myself in a small exterior office reception area, where a nice woman told me that this was the university office that indeed arranged for the abroad programs. I quickly learned that the only one for which I was qualified was the year in India. NO prior language skills needed and no specific major needed. They would even take an American institutions major and somehow consider that appropriate for the CYIP.” This student wrote 40 years later: “The sum of this year was the greatest educational experience of my life, more so than any college year, any law school year…” (1976-77 Vizakhapatnam participant) A Hobart College student looking for warm weather and a new experience wrote: “At the beginning of my sophomore year, I started to think about a study abroad program for junior year. My main concern was to get someplace warm. I
went to the dean to discuss possibilities for the following year, described my need to get to a warm place, and he told me about a program in Mexico. But, I had studied Spanish in high school, and I was looking for something different. He hemmed and hawed for a few moments, and then blurted out’…well, we had a student go to India a few years back…” (1976-77 Vizakhapatnam student)

Yet another student reported that a combination of a requirement, an athletic commitment that conflicted with many other classes, and a welcoming faculty member introduced the program to a scholarship-football player at the University of Arizona. “My major was Anthropology. One requirement for the degree was to have at least one year in a language, preferably other than Spanish or French. I selected Mandarin. I was attempting to register for Mandarin, but found out I could not because it conflicted with football practice. There was an Indian professor standing at the counter (this of course was during the days when you had to go to each department and register or classes) who overheard my conversation with the registration clerk. He invited me to register for his Hindi class. I told him I would consider it if I knew what it was. He made the connection between Hindi, Gandhi, Martin Luther King. Long story short, I enrolled in the class since it could fit into my schedule,

and it met my needs for my major. The professor of Hindi told me about the program.”

(1965-66 Varanasi participant)
Student Survey Question # 2
What led you to apply?

We asked this question hoping the replies would provide further insight into the motivation for choosing the CYIP, a year-long program including a summer of language study before departure in addition to the academic year. The range of answers reflected the diverse student body attracted to this program. One thread that wove several of these motivations together was a desire to see India other than as a tourist.

For some students, the idea of a year in India suggested adventure. “I was at UW Madison 1968-72. Things were pretty wild. I wanted a break. And I have always liked to travel. I was accepted for France, Germany, and India. I chose the one I thought I’d never get to again. Ha!” (1970-71 Delhi participant who went on to a career as a professor focusing on South Asian Art History). A student with no previous first-hand experience in India wrote, “I’d always longed to travel, and was looking to get as far away from the US (and western culture as I could.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant) Another student already committed to an academic degree program focusing on India acknowledged “I had taken one year of Sanskrit already, and a course on Indian kinship and marriage. But the real reason was this: it was the most exotic place I could imagine.” (1977-78 Vizakhapatnam participant). In another case, a student’s academic program required a world study program in a developing country. His college had programs in Mexico and China that would have met the requirement, but he wrote: “I wanted something “far-out” and going to India seemed exotic and cool. I did not possess any particularly [sic] interest in India prior to applying to the program.” (1982-83 Vizakhapatnam participant)

Many students applied because of a specific interest in India and/or South Asia. For some, the interest was tied to a childhood or high school educational experiences. One student wrote he
was drawn to apply to the program because of “a very big question going back to my childhood exposure to the idea of Sanskrit literature and interactions with close family friend, Swami Nikhilananda. I had recently begun to study Sanskrit at the time I learned about the program. Several years earlier, I had become engrossed in the Jungian explorations of Indian myths and symbols as discussed by Heinrich Zimmer, et.al.” (1971-72 Vizakhapatnam participant) In another case, a teacher’s experience combined with opportunity to add focus on India as a place to study: “My high school, a Quaker school outside of Philadelphia named George School, had developed an unusual (at the time) multi-year program in the study of non-Western history…One of my teachers was a charismatic Welshman named Perry Jones, who had lived in India after working with the Friends Ambulance Unit in China during World War II…although I might have applied to study-abroad programs in any number of countries if the opportunities had arisen, the India Program was the one that was offered to me.”(1964-65 Varanasi participant) A student whose interest in India grew in high school wrote: “I couldn’t wait to apply! That had been my goal since coming to the UW. I did switch the site I intended to apply to from Varanasi to Hyderabad, because the more I learned about India the more interested I became in living in a diverse city with a large Muslim population, such as Hyderabad.” (1996-97 Hyderabad participant)

In other cases, university experiences had developed a South Asian interest, making study in India a clear choice. “I was just back in Ithaca after a year at the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya where I had studied Sinhala, Sanskrit and development economics. It had been a wonderful year and I was ready for more.” (1965-66 Delhi participant) Another student wrote simply: “Since I was studying India, this was a great way to get there.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant)
For some students, interest in India was a sign of the times that led to a deeper academic interest. “I had become enamored of all things Indian through the prevailing American Counterculture of the era [early 1970s]. The classes I was taking in Indian history and anthropology at Saint Cloud painted a far less romantic picture of India than the one I had imagined or hoped for, but in the end one that was far richer and more complex, and it was this that prompted me to apply to the Wisconsin program. I wanted to see India first hand, not as a tourist, but in an academic setting.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant) In some cases, interest in travelling to Asia led students to India and in turn to a sustained interest in India. Traveling in Asia became more common in the late 1960’s and 1970s. “I had been an overland hippie to South Asia between 1976-78, so when I decided to go back to school and major in Anthropology & religion, I decided to focus on South Asia. The Wisconsin program gave me my first opportunity to learn some Indian languages (Hindi & Urdu) and do original research.” (1982-83 Varanasi participant)

Other students had experience in India accompanying parents whose work or research brought them to India. “I had lived in India as a child and wanted to return. (My parents were medical missionaries.) I did not want to go as a tourist but wanted the opportunity to live there again, as an adult, not under the auspices of my parents. And perhaps more importantly I felt that I had begun to lose my fluency in Hindi. The emphasis on language learning was a real draw to the program for me.” (1972-73 applicant, 1975-76 Varanasi participant)

In some cases, their parents’ work had taken them as children to various countries in Asia. In one case, that first-hand experience shaping the student’s career goals. “I had both personal and professional reasons for wanting to participate in the program. I had grown up in Asia (Nepal, Philippines, Malaysia and Pakistan) in an international development family and knew I also wanted to have a career in international development, and more specifically working on family
planning programming…I choose the Wisconsin program in India as it would allow me to study Hindi and also study the family planning program for my fieldwork. On a personal note, my father had passed away when I was a senior in high school in Islamabad, which meant my family abruptly moved by [sic] to the United States, - a country I had not lived in since I was a young child. Getting back to Asia was something I was determined to do and the Wisconsin program offered that opportunity.” (1979-80 Varanasi participant)

One student wanted to return specifically to a place where she had spent time as the child of Foreign Service officer in Sri Lanka. “My family lived in Columbo for three and half years from 1972-76 and I had attended an international school there than only went up through the 6th grade. After 6th grade, many of the international students from my school went to a boarding school called the Kodaikanal School in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. So after completing Class 6 in Colombo, I went to that boarding school. …In 1986-87 the University of Wisconsin-Madison had three Year in India Programs: one in Varanasi, one in Visakhapatnam and one in Madurai, Since Madurai was also in Tamil Nadu, that program was a perfect fit for me…when the chance to spend a full year in India through a language and culture immersion program presented itself, I jumped at the opportunity.” (1986-87 Madurai program participant)

Career goals in some cases led a student to apply to the program. “I had been a premed student as an undergraduate in Madison but …[it] became clear that the physical sciences were not what I wanted. Instead I wanted a social services/social justice focus and India fit extremely well with that new focus.” 1963-64 Delhi Participant. And in another case: “I met with either Joe Elder or the woman running the program and realized how it fit into my career interests. I also felt I had a great chance to get into the program, given my economics training.” (1965-66 Delhi participant)
Some students sought to explore their heritage through participation in the program. “I am Tamil-American. I was born in West Virginia and grew up in the foothills of the Appalachians. As a first generation American, I always wanted to reconnect with my South Indian roots. I needed to make some sense of my brownness in a predominantly white, rural environment. I also wanted to learn Tamil, as we spoke only English in my household.” (2003-04 Madurai participant)

And not least, Joe Elder’s encouragement and dedication to answer student’s questions about the program often sealed their commitment to apply and attend. One student applied and in the course of the interview process: …I walked into a hotel room in Boston, where I met Dr. Joseph Elder for an interview. It was a Truly ‘Wow’ experience. Words fail. Meeting Dr. Joseph Elder has and continues to be one of the greatest treasures life has given us.” (1983-84 Varanasi participant)

Another student wrote she was led to apply because of: “The literature available from the CYIP program and its tremendous reputation. …the extremely personal touch of the phone interview Joe used to do through the application process sold me…. the encouragement and reassurance Joe gave was tremendous. I still remember topics we covered – vegetarianism, Benares v. Madurai, drinking water, etc. etc.” (Rader, check date 1980s Madurai participant) “As an aspiring South Asianist, the next natural step for me was to study in India. I called Joe Elder II think his number was on the CYIP brochure I had) and he returned my call later that evening. Dr. Elder’s kindness, time, and interest in my ideas and how I could develop them through research in India confirmed that the program was a good fit.” (2002-03 Madurai participant)
Student Survey Questions # 3

What reflections do you have about your summer orientation?

The responses to this question covered a range of topics including personal growth, friendships made, academic learning, and cultural information. Overwhelmingly, the students acknowledged the value of the orientation. “The summer orientation was transformative.” (1981-82 Waltair participant). At the start, the orientation was 12 weeks long, over time it was reduced to 10 weeks, then 8 weeks. The decrease in time partly reflected the demands of a changing student culture, that became less interested in spending an entire summer for orientation in addition to the academic year abroad. “I doubt we’d do such things these days (both because of the time involved and because so much could be done online) but I appreciated it at the time.” (1988-89 Madurai program participant). Throughout, all student gathered together to prepare for their time in India. For the first decade, the orientation moved between campuses around the country (see section on orientation sessions). Local faculty and sometimes returning or prospective directors conducted the orientations and taught courses. With the exception of the first few years, Joe Elder participated in at least some weeks of the orientation. Beginning in 1973, Madison became the permanent location and Joe was the central coordinator, meeting with students about their projects, organizing the weekly orientation sessions and leading the role-playing scenarios that many students remembered well.

Many acknowledged that the personal growth was more fundamental than becoming acquainted with India. Most students had completed two or three years of college. The dimensions off personal growth differed for each student. “In the summer of 1964 I had the greatest time of my young life in Berkeley. I had grown up in New England, and had never been west of the Mississippi River…Upon arriving in Berkley, I immediately found a room in a house
with some international students, where my introduction to cooking for myself was West African groundnut stew…I would stop to listen to Mario Savio haranguing the populace from atop a card table…And, oh yes, I met my future wife…” (1964-65 Varanasi participant). Another student acknowledged, “I got to meet an entire new array of people from across the states and my eyes were opened to many issues, causes and ways of thinking far beyond my own…I went with him (another program participant) to Adlai Stevenson’s memorial funeral as his (the other participant’s) father was his friend…As background, I came out of a rather provincial small-town Wisconsin background, while most of the group was from across the US and many were very global in perspective, experiences, etc.” (Delhi participant, 1965-66). One woman wrote: “My flight to Madison for our summer orientation was my first experience on a plane…The summer orientation was a miracle of freedom for me. It was an incredibly exciting experience learning about another culture I had not known even existed. And I am not only talking about learning about the history and traditions of India---I am speaking about relating to a group of people my age who were from background outside my realm of personal experience…Associating with such a diverse group of people drawn from all over the U.S. was perhaps more culturally widening to me than studying the sociology of rural India…I had never had any form of boyfriend so my social interaction with the guys in our group was a revelation to me…” (1965-66 Hyderabad participant).

The summer also afforded the opportunity to make acquaintances that would enrich their experiences in India. One student wrote that in addition to program participants: “I also met interesting students not in the program—a British historian who had fascinating things to tell me about English class structure, and missionaries going to work at a leprosy hospital whom I met up with in Andhra Pradesh a couple of years later.” (1966-67 Hyderabad participant).
orientation period included areas of personal exploration not directly connected to the program.

“That summer in Chicago, I followed my UW girlfriend in becoming a born-again Christian. This led to quite a bit of Bible study that might have otherwise gone toward Hindi homework…Getting my tooth knocked out by a panhandler’s roundhouse on campus was humbling, humiliating and a lesson learned for this born-again yokel. Imparting a Christian moral message after I gave him change was not appreciated. I did manage to use the fake tooth replacement during my fieldwork at times…It was attached to a removable retainer, and I could use my tongue to flick the tooth out from its spot and back again to the delight of kids from whom I was learning games.” (1973-74 Varanasi program participant). In short, the orientation broadened the outlook of many young undergraduates beyond learning about India: “In Madison, I had my first experience in ‘cooperative housing’, where a kitchen, bath, and living room were shared. I generally felt awkward living in a more urban environment, where it seemed most people were quite knowledgeable about their intellectual capabilities and directions, compared to myself. Nonetheless, Madison offered my spirit many new perspectives – bike paths, awareness of dioxin in the lakes, a wide variety of intellectually scintillating topics and talks, an international street food bazaar. There was an arboretum. I learned that Carl Rogers and John Muir had both been students.” (1983-84 Varanasi participant).

The formation of group cohesion through program activities as especially rewarding along with making friends. “I have vivid memories of summer orientation in Madison. Between the excellent language instruction, cultural orientation program, and group activities, it was very successful in shaping a cohesive, cooperative, and enthusiastic cohort of students. This greatly contributed to the overall experience of the group in what was a very successful program in Varanasi that year.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant). Non-program activities also brought
students together: “…the boys in our group spent quite a bit of time playing basketball that summer.” (1963-64 Delhi participant. “…the flexibility that allowed a group of us to cook and eat together accelerated the process of building group cohesion.” (1970-71 Varanasi Participant.). Students attested to the fact that group cohesion built during the summer continued into the academic year: “I became close to my fellow program participants, some of whom were my roommates in Hyderabad as well as others whom I traveled with in India, Southeast and East Asia after the program was over. (1966-67 Hyderabad participant).

Some of these friendships lasted over time: “I think it was really valuable in making us a group (and we have had two reunions, one at 50 years and one at 55…” (1963-64 Delhi participant). Other program friendships became a professional network: “…the intensive language training was KEY –to beginning to learn about a culture, to establishing a cohort (which I still rely upon) wrote one student some 30 years later. (1988-89 Madurai program participant). And professional networks and personal friendships combined and overlapped: “The intense language learning environment and orientations cultivated an ideal space to form intimate friendships and even fourteen year later, I still maintain friendships and/or positive collegial relationships with many fellow CYIP students and faculty.” (2002-03 Madurai participant). The support of a cohort when going on a program into an unfamiliar place was key for some student, for others: “…I enjoyed being around people who were as obsessed with India as I was.” (1977-78 Waltair participant).

Language preparation was one of the mainstays of the summer orientation. A new alphabet had to be learned as well as the language itself with nuances like aspirated vs. non-aspirated sounds. In keeping with the pedagogical methods of the time in the early years, language study was a classroom/homework exercise, and not always totally satisfactory: “The
focus of the program that summer was primarily language instruction in Hindi. But during the summer there was little chance to actually use Hindi and that began a year-long paralysis in the use of Hindi for our group.” (1963-64 Delhi participant). Over time the opportunities to use Hindi expanded while formal classes remained a key focus: ‘…five hours a day, five days a week-for 10 weeks, plus ample homework. This was quite intense, but I really enjoyed working together with my fellow UW College Year students on the assignments, group work, etc. I have great memories of class visits to Devil’s Lake…and conversation groups on the Terrace.” (1988-89 Varanasi participant). One student summarized the basic goal throughout the years of the program: “We were to disembark in north India, functional in basic Hindi.” (1983-85 Varanasi participant).

**Students often remembered their teachers fondly:** “Our summer Hindi teachers, Anoop & Sudha Chandola, could not have been more encouraging, kinder or sweeter. We were launched into learning to speak an unfamiliar language, something that has never come particularly easy for me given my introverted and private nature. (1973-74 Varanasi participant).

Other students remembered Hindi instructors Menindra and Sushila Verma, S. N. Upadhyaya, Mitlesh Mishra and Virendra Singh with warmth and gratitude.

Telugu and Tamil, Dravidian languages, demanded learning not only a new alphabet but also many sounds difficult for a native English speaker and ones not represented in English phonetics. One student wrote: “Telugu study was a challenge as effective language learning techniques for Dravidian languages had not yet been developed and I can’t say that any of the 9 of us in my group really learned sufficient language skills that summer to help us much in our lives in Hyderabad.” (1965-66 Hyderabad participant). For another student a year later, Telugu was a perfect challenge: “I very much enjoyed the Telugu language course, which was part of the
Midwestern consortium on South Asia at the University of Chicago in the summer of 1966. I have always been fascinated by languages and love learning new alphabets. In high school I had studied Russian and during my junior year in Israel I had become fluent in modern Hebrew and taught myself how to read the Arabic alphabet. I had also taken a linguistics course at Wisconsin…The Telugu instructors were very personable, and I feel I learned a lot from them.” (1966-67 Hyderabad participant). Another student wrote: “I greatly appreciated Narayana Rao’s and Phil Wagoner’s styles of teaching and the opportunity to focus on language for ten weeks. And though I don’t think I had ever even heard of Telugu prior to that summer, I quickly discerned I had a knack for it, and fell in love with it right away. (I can even now [about 30 years later] recite a dialogue or two that Narayana Rao and Phil asked us to memorize.)”

“I treasured having the time to devote completely to learning a new language and my teachers – Jim Lindholm and Sam Sudandumha – were supremely good teachers who knew how to make learning fun even though Tamil is a notoriously difficult language for non-native speakers to learn.” (1986-87 Madurai participant). One student with a wry sense of humor noted: “Tamil is harder than the other languages. [smiley face emoji added here in the student’s response]. Seemed like the Nepali and Hindi classes were laughing and enjoying singing songs at the end of the 1st week while us Tamil students were trying to form linguistically correct retroflex Ls. [another smiling emoji here] Seriously though, the intensive language training was KEY – to beginning to learn about a culture…” (1988-89 Madurai participant). Another student recalled “Academically, Tamil was very difficult for me. I’m extremely hard working and yet, that didn’t seem quite good enough in the Tamil class…I felt very self-conscious –especially because we had several Indian Americans and NRIs [Non-resident Indians] in our class who seemed to understand almost everything. I was just twenty at the time…Fortunately, I now get
by in everyday Tamil easy enough (after three years! Of intensive training…People in Chennai
and the U.S. even comment on my ‘Madurai Tamil’ which feels terrific.” (2002-03 Madurai
participant). And for one Indian American: ‘I am Tamil-American. I was born in West
Virginia…I also wanted to learn Tamil, as we only spoke English in my household. Learning
Tamil was far more difficult than I imagined.” (2003-04 Madurai participant).

While language study remained a primary focus of the orientation, the emphasis of
the academic portion of the orientation shifted over time. Initially, all students took at least
one content course focused on India in addition to the language study. “As a government /econ
undergrad, I had no background in sociology. Joe’s course [Indian Sociology] did an overview of
the sociological perspective on India, introduced me to the basics of theory in the discipline (Esp
Talcott Parsons who had clearly been an important influence in Joe’s graduate studies) and the
course used a really compelling case study (courtesy of M.N. Srinivas) on collective caste
mobility to convey the fluidity of social structures in India. I couldn’t have asked for a more
useful course and a better teacher. (1965-66 Delhi participant). Faculty also gave lectures on
specific topics: “I remember especially the talk about the history of the train system in India
which I was later to personally experience by third class rail from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.”
(1965-66 Hyderabad participant). Over the years, the course requirement was eliminated though
students attended weekly films, many made specifically for University students.

The cultural orientation developed over the years based in part at least on the
experience of previous cohorts of students. Balancing every day matters with broader cultural
issues was a constant challenge. One student remembered “At the end of the semester, Narayana
Rao invited us to his house for an Indian meal. It was the first time I ate with my hand. It was
incredibly awkward, but also very liberating…[yet] In retrospect, the orientation did prepare us
with language, but was not much help in terms of cultural preparation.” (1976-77 Waltair participant). One respondent to the survey found the cultural portion of the orientation significantly lacking. “…we went through the summer orientation classes together. Most of them seemed to emphasize further language study, some cultural discussion, but having already believed in India, I either didn’t pay much attention or didn’t hear a lot of discussion of the nitty-gritty aspects of our living there.” (1981-82 Varanasi participant). Other students from those years felt otherwise, but in the end, each student had their own experience. From the first years of the program, one student suggested that, “I think it would have helped to read British as well as Indian newspapers and start to plug into the realities of life in India.” (1963-64 Delhi participant) The subsequent years placed considerable emphasis on the realities of life according to the responses of virtually all other students.

Meeting topics expanded and shifted to address current circumstances, written materials expanded from one-page handout sheets to handbooks, to on-line materials, faculty, returning students and on-site staff participated during different phases of the program.

Some of the recollections of summer orientation are remarkably detailed, even many years later. “Regarding orientation, I do not remember when I received a set of mimeographed sheets with comments on what to expect when living in India or related discussions. But I do know I saved them for years afterwards and occasionally offered them to people I knew who were planning to visit India for the first time, because they were so informative.” (1966-67 Hyderabad participant). One student recollected a specific orientation session: “I remember some very interesting assignments and discussions that John [Grace] and Joan [Raducha] led us in considering. Nothing specific comes to mind (this was a long time ago other than general culture clash/challenges that we’d face. Oh wait; we did rib John about his
metaphorical alluding to “wallowing” as a condition we might encounter in or experiencing the year ahead. He used a reading/poem to sketch the concept and then took it from there.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant).

Another student noted how information from the orientation was especially useful in a particular situation in India: “Summer orientation was great. What could be bad about a summer in Madison. My most vivid memories are the description of the various kind of toilets we might encounter in India…And a very detailed description of how varied the etiquette of eating with one’s hand is in different castes/different regions. This turned out to be VERY useful when I found myself as the houseguest of people I didn’t know who had an unexpected death in the family. I was thrust into 4 days of ritual/mourning/cooking/eating and I was very thankful I had been given the cultural awareness to notice the customs in this family were different, and more formal, than what I was accustomed to. Someone even noticed that I had been very comfortable with all the eating situations and hadn’t eaten like a barbarian!” (1980-81 Varanasi participant).

In the late 1960s and 1970s, as many American and European young adults traveled through India as ‘hippies’ CYIP students were encouraged to rather follow local norms for dress and more: “I remember and appreciated the guidelines for dressing and acting appropriately in Banaras.” (1971-72 Varanasi participant) Students also recollected hearing detailed information about practical every day matters that would directly relate to their experience: “The expected thing was studying Telugu and unexpected was the introduction to practical things like clothing, the life in the ladies’ hostel and manners.” (1968-69 Hyderabad participant). Every day matters included telling students that they might be called upon to entertain a family or other group – a common request of program students in the days before electronic entertainment. “Many of the group sessions, such as the demonstration of toilet matters and taking a bath with one cup of
water were practical necessities. The command to spontaneously sing a song with [Jim MacDonald, another student] in front of the group resulted in “You are my sunshine.” The exercise proved to be valuable when we were requested to sing and could repeat our performance in front of the Agra Chamber of Commerce (at their request) on the grounds of the Taj in the moonlight.” (1968-69 Varanasi participant).

Joe Elder’s role in the orientation was multifaceted. Joe met with each student more than once as they developed their fieldwork project ideas. “Individual conversations about fieldwork proposals with Joe Elder were golden moment, despite his insistence on early breakfast meetings. (1968-69 Varanasi participant). Joe’s positive and caring attitude was apparent. “Joe Elder was a tremendous ambassador for the program and his enthusiasm for India and for experiences we would have during the year were infectious.” (1979-80 Varanasi participant). “In it all, was the warm sun of Dr. Elder’s distant, yet somehow closely caring eye upon us all.” (1983-84 Varanasi participant). “I recall meeting with Joe and being captivated by his energy, enthusiasm and warmth.” (1982-83 Waltair participant). “Many people can look back at their educational experience and identify a teacher or two who really made a difference in their lives. For me, this person was Joe Elder. He did what all great educators do. He recognized the potential and was determined to unearth it…He listened patiently to my ill-conceived plans for an arcane paper….and he looked at me in a direct manner [and asked] ”Is this what you really want to do?” I sighed. What I really want to do is make a film.” With affectionate mock outrage he said “...come back here in two weeks with a plan of how you are going to get this done.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant).

The role-play scenarios that Joe developed and led provided much food for thought and often predicted experiences students would have in India. “I have many reflections about the
summer orientation, including the role-play Joe created to help us practice telling someone (teacher, landlord, friend) that we wouldn’t give them money. It sounds crazy but over the course of many visits to India, I indeed found myself in those very situations.” (2004-05 Varanasi participant). He encouraged students at critical moments, “In any case, even if I don’t mention it, Dr. Elder still remembers how difficult it was for me—perhaps because I called him at least once in tears somewhat unable to speak because I felt like a failure over Tamil.” (2002-03 Madurai participant.

Overall, the orientation sessions were considered to be helpful and Joe Elder was recognized as a key factor. “The orientation sessions were quite good. Especially those led by Dr. Elder.” (2003-04 Madurai participant). One student summed up his experience with the orientation that is perhaps the greatest tribute to Joe Elder’s efforts: “I have vivid memories of our summer orientation at Madison...I have worked on a number of study-abroad programs over the years, each of which has had its own style of orienting students. Wisconsin’s summer orientation program is by far the best organized and most successful one I ever encountered, and certainly is one of CYIP’s great strengths.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant).
Student Survey Question # 4

What reflections do you have on your fieldwork project (selecting, conducting, writing?)

The program’s creators imagined the fieldwork project to serve as a vehicle for delving deeply into an aspect of Indian culture. For virtually all the participants, the majority of whom were in their junior year, this would be their first experience conducting research in the field. In the face of obstacles encountered at every stage, students felt pride in their efforts including initial conceptualization, formulating (or in some cases admittedly stumbling into) a focused project, conducting the research, and the final product. The final products included written papers, performances, paintings, and films. The following are representative of the types of recollections that students shared.

Personal accomplishment

One student remembered: “Our flight to India on Pan Am airlines stopped many times along the route – I recall stopping in London, Frankfurt, Munich, Istanbul, and Tehran. Wow was I jetlagged. Instead of beginning our time in India with a couple days of just rest, we immediately jumped into an orientation that scared me to death. The orientation began a year-long lack of emotional and personal’s logistical support for our work. It also labeled the fieldwork project as a research project with brought very demanding expectations for an undergraduate who we quite unprepared to ‘conduct research’…we got very little advice from either the American or the Indian Faculty during the whole year…In hindsight, the field project is one of the very best parts of the year. It let me get deeply meshed in some aspect of Indian life that we cared deeply about. After spending some months observing and helping at three high schools in the Subzi Mandi area of Delhi, I conducted interviews, mostly in Hindi, with teachers at those three schools. In the months
after I returned, I turned these interviews into a Senior Honors thesis at the University of Wisconsin. (1963-64 Delhi participant)

Some students experimented with a new field of study: “Somehow I decided to study Bharata Natyam, both physically learning it and writing about it. I don’t remember how I was introduced to my dance teacher, Mr. Narayan, but he and his family ended up as important people in my life. I asked if I could move in with his family and I lived with my teacher, his wife and 3 children, sleeping all together on the floor of his small home for about 4 months of my time that year in India. I bicycled every morning through the city up to Osmania University where I attended my Telugu and Sanskrit classes, had lunch with my group, and then returned home for my dance classes and dinner. The food was far better at my teacher’s house! I studied books about dance and gave a small dance recital at the end of the year both in Hyderabad and in Delhi. I had never been into athletics in any form, and this was the most difficult physical exertion I have attempted in my life. And I and my teacher quickly discovered that my body was not made for this form of dance - at all. I could not squat much less bend down as required for Bharata Natyam postures. So the result was a better written product than a visual one. I understand that others, after me, on the CYIP studied dance with much better results. But I believe I was the first to take it on as my fieldwork project.” (1965-66 Hyderabad participant).

I have no clear recollection as to how I chose my project, or projects. I believe I chose to study parapsychology because I knew of no American University that even had a serious class in this area, and Andhra University had a whole department. I came to know the priests at the local Catholic school, and they consented to my using the students as my subjects, endlessly “reading” cards, and I tallied the results, learned about regression analysis, and learned more from the priests than the study.” (1976-77 Waltair participant).
Another student wrote: “Early housing mismatches and challenges finally lead to residence in the fascinating Assi neighborhood, right by the Ganga. In fact, my fieldwork project emerged from this location, because it turned out to be the home of a locally prominent devotee of the Hindu ‘Monkey God,’ Hanuman. I’d had other good ideas but lacked the confidence and savvy to follow them through. Then I realized that I was living every day in a context that others might find fascinating, in a monkey-surrounded house with a lovely family that included a grandfather who spent almost his entire day in worship of his beloved god Rama and servant Hanuman. He was agreeable to have me meet with him at home, join domestic worship and celebrations, and shadow him on temple visits. I ended up editing and producing a small pamphlet, expressing my host’s religious devotion, and even containing small bits of home-spun wisdom like, “an apple a day, be happy and gay!” One cannot over emphasize how difficult it is to write up such a piece, to find the intellectual framing and distance that is needed to reflect upon one’s experience while still fully immersed in the context, but in the end, I bashed something together that my supervisors, thankfully, accepted it. (1973-74 Varanasi participant).

Another student explained: “Following my experience studying flute with Vishvanathan in Madison, I decided I wanted to study music in India, preferably percussion, which I had studied for a dozen years in the US. It took a few months, but I finally made a connection with an Indian musician, V. Narasimham, who played and taught mridangam. Although local to Vizag, he was a high-level artist, and was a staff artist on All-India Radio. I was extremely fortunate to work with him. He taught me as he would any Indian student (I went to his house two to three times a week and lessons generally lasted two to three hours), but because I had only about seven months to work with him, he accelerated the course. By the time I left, we covered about two years of the typical course. Beyond lessons, we also went to temples and to performances together, and he
took me to Vijiawada to meet his master as well as to visit a village where they made the drums. (I spent a day documenting the hand manufacture of the mrdangam—one of the highlights of my year in India.) All this fed into my field study, however, I also combined library research with the project (the mrdangam has a number of interesting physical properties, which a famous Indian physicist investigated long ago). To all this, I added research on the religious significance of the instrument. I was a generally slow worker, and I was not able to complete the writing before I left India. When I returned to Hobart college, I was overwhelmed with several long papers (including an honors project). I did not finish the project for two or three years, but I did finally hand it in (I was already a grad student by this time). The project is quite good, and having now written and published extensively, I still have a great sense of pride in it. I also made some forays into the study of traditional Indian philosophy as a possible field study, but in the end this project did not pan out (largely due to my own lack of sophistication in philosophy—a subject that is not quickly mastered).” (1976-77 Waltair participant).

One student recalled: “My field work study, “The Situation of India’s Industrial Working Class,” was a fabulous experience. I traveled to factories, arranged by the great M.V. Krishnayya (who I am still in contact with today and less than two years ago he was a guest at my house for several days in Chevy Chase, MD). I was interested in strikes, the rise of industrial workers and how India would deal with this massive transformation. I was also a Marxist-light type (I’ve been in the investment business for 25 years plus now), and India was teeming with Marxist ideas at the time. Fortunately, they went in another direction. I wrote something I am still very proud of today. Candidly, I poured my heart and soul into my project.” (1982-83 Waltair participant).

**Career direction**
For one student: “Working with girls from the School of Social Work, I did research on girls’ education in a village ½ [hour] north by bus of the university. M.S.A. Rao told me many years later that the village is now fully incorporated in Delhi…I did extract my nots and that final paper some 10-15 years ago and was shocked and pleased to see that I had done real research. Minimal Hindi and all. That was the beginning of research on India and on women in India that continues to this day.” (1963-64 Delhi participant).

Another student wrote: “The CYI program had a small library which I made good use of, and I came to realize that, contrary to what I thought, libraries (including my college library!) were inadequate: there was so much to learn that had not yet been written about. So, the CYI made a researcher out of me. It was exciting that we CYIP students were given the responsibility of doing a research project which was a major portion of our program. The program at that point had the money to hire an interpreter for me and a van to take the two of us out to a village where I engaged in interviewing. I was twenty years old and I had my ‘own village’! Amazing!... The CYI dictated the course of the rest of my life. Apart from going on to do research and writing about India, I engaged in institution-building activities in the Nordic region. For example, when I got to the University of Oslo, one of my long-term goals was to make it possible for Norwegian/Nordic undergraduates to spend time studying in India. To that end I put a lot of time and energy into the establishment of the Nordic Centre in India, with one of its major duties being to facilitate student study in India.” (1964-65 Hyderabad participant)

For another student: “Defining a "doable" question of investigation, attempting different methods of fieldwork, analysis of the collected material and drawing conclusions was a valuable experience. The work was preparatory for further academic projects. (1968-69 Delhi participant)
While most projects resulted in written papers, several students produced films: “It was my first film. I learned how to move in space with a camera, how to see, how to be, really. I became a filmmaker in a city with three names: Banaras, Varanasi, Kashi. I was a foreigner, I didn't speak the language, and in this holiest of cities, my understanding of the local religion was rudimentary.

So, I had to learn to shoot and respond without language, from the small clues people give. And I had to learn to be modest about how much I understood. It taught me how to collaborate with insiders, and how not to forget the limitations as well as the benefits of being an outsider.” (1968-69 Hyderabad participant).

Another student remembered: “I knew I wanted to write about religion and about a subject where I might have an advantage by being a woman. I think it may have been Pat Pranke who suggested that I wrote about Santoshi Ma, a goddess whose popularity was gained through a movie. I really enjoyed the interviews that I conducted, though I felt at a loss when writing any background about goddess worship in general since we did not really have access to any library materials. I very vividly remember having multiple conversations about the role of participant vs participatory anthropology. So many of the women I spoke with asked if I was keeping the vrat for Santoshi Ma. I was not and did not feel comfortable pretending that I was, but I also felt that was perhaps impeding my research. I still wish I could have figured out a way to speak with the creators of the movie because my research eventually got stuck in a cycle of the same questions and answers - where did Santoshi Ma come from? Didn't you see the movie? Yes, but how did they know to make the movie? and then I would be told the story of the movie. This experience made me also realize that my questions were only important to an outsider like me. They were not important questions to those who believed. This experience made me also realize that my questions were only important to an outsider like me. They were not important questions to those
who believed. The enjoyed the research far more than the writing of the project which gave me important insights about whether a doctorate would be the right direction. (1976-77 Varanasi participant).

Another student’s recollection was: “The project selected me. A cyclone hit the coast of Andhra in November of 1977. 25,000 people died. I wanted to know how the survivors adapted, and, by hook or crook, finagled a way to get to the affected area, a place called Divi Seema. I ended up spending three months there. Fortunately, Andhra University was on strike the entire year I was on the program, so I could spend my time doing research. And god knows, I certainly wouldn't have learned any Telugu if I had had to attend language classes. As it was, I wrote a paper on the concept of karma, and it became the basis of my first three published articles.” (1977-78 Waltair participant)

Another student wrote: “My fieldwork project was foundational for my career as a researcher in global reproductive health. Selecting my fieldwork project was easy since I knew I wanted to study India’s family planning program. I took some reference documents that I would need to write the background section about the history of India’s family planning program, which dated back to the 1950s. I was also able to visit some family planning clinics in Varanasi and to develop an assessment tool for the visits. I brought a small typewriter with me and typed my fieldwork project on it. Doing that fieldwork project served me well in my career. I was able to see firsthand the type of care provided to women in the clinics and the importance of improving quality of care – including the way providers treated clients. I also gained insights into the plight of providers – the conditions under which they work that affects their ability to provide quality care to clients. I saw that most managers were men, and the providers were women and from that
I began to understand the gender dynamics of health programming.” (1979-80 Varanasi participant).

Remembering the experience, a student wrote: “I remember enjoying working on a project that was an extension of the approach to writing history that I had learned in college. That is, I was very interested in applying theory to history, in this case, turning a collection of interviews with locals into an exercise in problematizing the legitimacy of the official record. I recall it not being particularly well received by the history faculty at Andhra University, but I enjoyed giving it a shot, experimenting with the very nature of sources in the writing of history. This, of course, would also serve me quite well later, since my Ph.D. dissertation was essentially based on that same approach to the sources in the archives.” (1985-86 Waltair participant).

Another student replied: “It took me a while to choose a fieldwork project because everything seemed so interesting. But with the help of Shekar (Rajasekaran) who was our in-country advisor, I decided to do my project on a festival for the Hindu goddess Mariamman who had a small neighborhood shrine at the end of the narrow Pookara Lane where I was living. Shekar himself was a wealth of information about Tamil culture and he also had a good network of contacts with whom he put me in touch for help with my project. I interviewed a local professor of religion about the mythology of Mariamman and I interviewed the priest (pujari) of the temple and several members of the neighborhood community about Mariamman and about the festival. But the most exciting part of the project was participating in the festival for three days and three nights. This involved watching the pujari do the puja, listening to women ululating as the rice pongal boiled over in their pots, doing the kollattum dance in a circle with the neighborhood women, and processing through the streets of Madurai in the dark of night while a group of men, carried the goddess on a palanquin and drummers kept up a rhythmic beat throughout the night.
Several of the men and women in our procession broke into trances as they became possessed by Mariamman, some of them shaking uncontrollably and others, who were covered in ash and wielding swords pierced with limes in their clenched teeth and balancing sacred pots on their heads, were dancing in slow motion. When the procession reached the banks of the Vagai River, the goddess was submerged in the river, chickens were ritually sacrificed and a feast was distributed to all. Although at times I felt nervous being the midst of something so utterly unfamiliar to me, because I was surrounded by my neighbors who were explaining things to me, I was mostly at ease and could let myself get caught up in the same emotions as my neighbors—excitement when the pongal boiled over or when eyes were painted onto the Mariamman murti, and a feeling of peace when all that remained of that form of the goddess after she was submerged in the river were strands jasmine and petals of roses.

Throughout the festival I took a series of photographs, and I created a photo essay about the events of the festival. It was based on that photo essay that I was honored to receive the Minnie Helen Hicks Award for Excellence in Anthropology when I graduated from Brown University at the end of that year. Without knowing the name for it at the time, this was my first experience of what anthropologists call “participant-observation” and ethnography. So it was perhaps not too surprising that I would later become a professional anthropologist and would come to devote my professional life to doing ethnographic fieldwork primarily in Tamil Nadu, still using my Tamil language skills that I first learned in Madison and Madurai on the University of Wisconsin-Madison program. And as fate would have it, during my current research on cancer over the past two summers (2015 and 2016), Mariamman has found her way back into my life as I have met some cancer patients who turn to Mariamman (and a medium through whom Mariamman speaks) for guidance about what kind of therapies they should seek. (1987-88 Madurai participant).
Another student wrote: “My fieldwork project ended up becoming the basis of a Fulbright research project and eventually my Ph.D. dissertation. I truly see the value in this endeavor, 12-13 years later. This type of intense research experience is transformative for young people. Most study abroad programs aim to produce engaged, worldly aware students. The UW program produced scholars.” (2003-04 Madurai participant).

**Tough grading**

One student remembered: “I picked from an urban planning course work in urban development while in my junior year at UW. The professor and I arranged that I work with a researcher at the gov’t institute of town and city planning and worked out this remarkable study of a squatter area and its relocation. I worked out a questionnaire, got the aide of a translator [impossible otherwise as many dialects far too complex for my Hindi], lived there part of the time and truly learned a great deal. This was my first major paper and the first draft was fairly disorganized so Dr. Basu, our instructor, had me rewrite it…I actually was asked when I got back to Madison to write my paper as a larger 1000-page book for a series on urban planning in developing countries but I did not. While Basu gave me a B to my chagrin, the faculty at UW and the group handling this book series were very impressed. I never published it as I did not have the skill, time or resources for that.” (1965-66 Delhi participant)

Another wrote: “It was an amazing experience, doing interviewing in a village. The program had a lot of money and a van took me to the site, about 25 miles from what was then Hyderabad. My first interpreter was a loss, but then I had the services of a lovely man who came from a village and enjoyed being back in one with me. Having the experience to do field research at the age of 20/21 was very special. I came from a demanding college (Wellesley), so was used to the rigors of reading on a topic and writing, but I got my project written just under the wire
before my parents and I had to leave for the airport. (I had traveled to Poona where my parents had been staying and we flew to Europe together.) A great disappointment was that I received a 'B' on the paper with that only comment being that I should have supplied a glossary.”(1964-65 Hyderabad participant).

 Advisors, fieldwork assistants, and Joe Elder’s guidance

One student wrote: “I used my bike to travel out into the countryside to the east of the Osmania campus to select a site for my village goddess research. I had a student interpreter who accompanied me and went out looking for promising locations. I was searching for a settlement that would be far from the city and have numerous small village goddess temples. It was through these explorations that I hit upon Medipalli (which now appears on Google Maps as Medipally, Canara Nagar, Peerzadiguda). It was about seven miles (11 kilometers) from the campus and in what was fifty years ago a very rural area. In addition to interviewing its residents, I also met and interviewed a number of people from other settlements in the area, such as Uppal and Boduppal. I took extensive photographs of village goddess temples and recorded related legends and songs of village goddesses (using my Uher professional portable tape recorder). Doing my research I used several Osmania students (a man and later a woman) to accompany me and interview local villagers as well as to translate the texts I collected.” (1966-67 Hyderabad participant)

Another student remembered: “Many people can look back at their educational experience and identify a teacher or two who really made a difference in their lives. For me, this person was Joe Elder. He did what all great educators do. He recognized potential and was determined to
unearth it. In my particular case, many teachers had attempted this thankless task and a few had succeeded (to a degree) but Joe, as he has done for countless students over the years, prevailed in a way which forever changed the trajectory of my life.

He listened patiently to my ill-conceived plans for an arcane fieldwork paper on Vedantic philosophy and he looked at me in a very direct manner – sort of like a great prosecuting attorney who asks a question so simply and honestly that the thought of perjury never enters your mind. “Is this what you really want to do?” I sighed. There was no place to hide, and I knew this guy was so wicked smart only the truth was going to satisfy him. “No, of course not.” Another sigh. “What I really want to do is make a film.” With affectionate mock outrage he said, ‘Then get the hell out of my office and come back here in two weeks with a plan of how you are going to get this done.’

Looking back on this experience, after a successful career making award winning films for a hugely diverse set of clients, I wonder what would have happened without his tough-loving guidance? He gave me courage when I needed it the most. His belief in me far exceeded my belief in myself and his massive intellect (for which I had the utmost respect) gave me the confidence to pursue my dreams. If this incredibly smart guy thought I could actually pull this off, maybe I actually could? Seems to me the positive core of The College Year in India Program is pretty close to this noble effort. It seems logical since the program wouldn’t really exist with the courage, spirit and example of such a great educator.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant).

One student recollected: “Long afternoons working one on one with Geshe Wangchen were fantastic. My fieldwork served as a framework for additional study I did after I returned home.” (1980-81 Varanasi participant).
Another student wrote: “I remember this being quite overwhelming at times. I was fortunate to have a very good fieldwork advisor – Dr. Anand Kumar at BHU. I am still in touch with him and consider him a friend and a mentor. He has helped me over the years better understand the nuances of Indian society and culture. Selecting a fieldwork topic was the first hurdle, and Joe ji was extremely helpful in narrowing down the focus and identifying feasible projects. This was the case for me, as well as for all of the students on the program when I was the monitor. I think his guidance early on and when he visited India mid-way through the year helped make a daunting task seem more much more manageable. The monitors and Ramu Pandit were also extremely helpful in making the necessary connections for the students – including fieldwork advisors, fieldwork assistants, interpreters and of course the informants. Conducting fieldwork was a new experience for all of the students, and I think the guidance of the student monitors was especially important. In general, the idea of employing past program students as mentors and resident directors helped the students gain confidence so that they could also manage to overcome the inevitable obstacles that India and field based research put in front of you.” (1988-89 Varanasi participant).

Another student wrote: “I've always loved reading good ethnography and I valued the opportunity to conduct ethnographic research as an undergraduate immensely. I found it very helpful to discuss project ideas with Dr. Elder in Madison beforehand because he knew the area and helped me grasp what might be feasible. Fortunately, when I got to Chennai (where we stayed for a few days before Madurai), Seker and Zoe (our resident coordinator and monitor) immediately began talking with me about it as well. In fact, I remember sharing samosas and chai with them just after arrival at the ideal beach resort in Mahaballipuram (everyone else was jet-lagged and sleeping).“ (2002-03 Madurai participant).
A student recalled: “The Cold War was still flourishing and I was very aware (long before the Ramparts expose) that the US Government had decided after WWII to covertly support non-Marxist socialist parties in many countries to tilt their national political trajectories away from Russia. From this perspective I decided to write about the non-Marxist socialists in India, particularly the Praja Socialist Party and the Samyukta Socialist Party from a descriptive, institutional perspective - why was Indian socialism so fissiparous? Why did a generally agreed democratic socialist doctrine not emerge. Very much old-school institutional "Government" as opposed to modern, theory based political science. There was almost no secondary literature on my subject, which was great. There was a plethora of primary material (political tracts, platforms, speeches, etc) which were ephemera - but emphemera that could be located with some effort. More importantly, the founders and leaders of the Socialist parties since Independence were almost all alive and kicking. Even better, most of them were in the Lok Sabha, so they lived in the MP's Hostel in New Delhi and were easy to find.

My fieldwork methodology was really basic. I would send a telegram asking for an appointment (at Rs 1/- telegrams were much more effective than letters and most socialist MPs did not have a private telephone). Once an initial appointment was made, I would arrive and simply invite them to tell me how they joined the socialist movement and what happened next. Most Socialist MPs were fairly poor (lower middle class in income) and not much in the public eye. So, they loved to talk. I spent countless afternoons at MP hostel sitting on cheap wicker chairs and listening to stories. I would always offer to order tea from the Hostel Canteen (on my dime) which was never refused. I took no written notes during our conversations (I did all the write ups
afterwards) to keep things in the informal story-telling mode. With a few of the more bohemian Socialists (I think here especially of the Assamese Poet Hem Barua) I would bring a few bottles of chilled Kingfisher - not available from the MP Hostel Canteen) in the later afternoon --- which would usually yield a three-hour interview/discussion. I deliberately avoided working from a hypothesis or testing a theory. My historian father had encouraged me to learn the narrative very well before applying artificial intellectual constructs. So, I did my project more the way a long-form journalist might have than an academic.

The resulting paper was not anything that would have made it into the American Political Science Review, but the process of producing it was enormously useful to me in gaining a feel for the give and take of political party life in India. I had a permanent pass to the Visitors’ Gallery in the Lok Sabha and by January, I could immerse myself in the political give and take during floor debate and then eat samosas with some of the principals to get the back-story to the day's (or week's) political dramas.” (1965-66 Delhi participant).

Another student wrote: “My fieldwork was to gather an oral history of leading participants of Gandhi's independence movement in Vizag. Most were elderly. All still burned with the fire of that epic political and philosophical drive. And, in 1975/76, all were in opposition to Indira Gandhi's "emergency" and its suspension of regular democracy. Some were in jail because of their opposition, which put me in the position of petitioning the police for permission to interview them, and a very skeptical police response. Others had left to out-of-the-way ashrams to avoid scrutiny or arrest. I traveled to an ashram south of Rajahmundry to interview one Satyagraha veteran. Their passion moved me deeply.” (1973-74 Waltair participant).
A third student remembered: “I was so naive! I had the help of my incredible monitor, Lisa Mitchell, who was a real mentor through the process. Even so, I can't believe I had the gall to think that people would share their stories with me - which they did with such patience and generosity of spirit. Now that I'm middle-aged, I sometimes wonder what they must have thought of this young American girl asking them about their lives and taking notes. I now strive to emulate the patience and generosity that I was shown during that time. (1996-97 Hyderabad participant).

Reflecting on my fieldwork, it strikes me as weirdly ambitious – train as a wrestler in a Banarsi akhara and simultaneously do fieldwork and make a film. Somehow, that crazy effort just really paid off. My Hindi improved dramatically and I got my first real taste of embedded filmmaking. Incidentally, it also led me to request a meeting with the documentary filmmaker Anand Patwardhan, with no introduction other than an email mentioning my UW student status. When I arrived at his home in Mumbai, he greeted me with “So, you must know Joe Elder.” (2004-05 Varanasi participant)

**Mechanical challenges – carbon paper etc.**

A student remembered: “Writing the project was physically laborious. I did not type at that point, so we found a typist who would read my handwritten pages and pages and pages. While writing, I had to anticipate in the text how to note the placement of the black and white photographs and diagrams. It was a bit tricky, writing up all the rules of the 60 plus games so they made sense and jived w/the photo. At times, I had to leave lines partially open because my deadlines did. Not allow me to find out exactly the name of the bazaar or whatever at the time. Later, I would handwrite the info.” (1973-74 Varanasi participant)

Another student wrote: “I had decided to do my fieldwork project on Sai Baba. Since he lived in Andhra Pradesh, that turned my interest to Telugu. My field work project advisor, Prof.
G. Raju, was very encouraging, yet he encouraged me to make my own schedule. I visited the ashram at Puttaparthi in Ananthapur district twice that year. There were throngs of people there for the Dasarah festival during my first visit. My second trip was in January and that was much more subdued. I stayed for ten days and got to know the ashram pretty well. I saw Sai Baba interact with many devotees on a daily basis. Once, I recorded a long discourse that Sai Baba gave in Telugu to a large audience. Prof. Raju and I translated portions of it when I got back to Višākhapatnam. My fieldwork project reviewed the published literature about Sai Baba, summarized dozens of interviews with devotees and compared his leadership style with other living saints of South Asian religions. I remember that the writing went quickly, but typing it up with several carbon copies on an old manual typewriter was quite a chore.” (1981-82 Waltair participant).

A student remembered: “writing it was not, thankfully, difficult at all for me, as I had brought a prized 1936 Remington Rand portable typewriter with me. Which I’d used for a year or so before on other things. At one point, the carriage return cable on the old warhorse snapped. But I managed to jerry-rig a cable with a nylon cord, and all was right and well again. I would, I think, have had no end of difficulty, stress, and frustration had I tried to write or keep my research on a computer, as at the time, India’s electricity was inconsistent at best in Varanasi, and I learned the term ‘load shedding’ and brownouts from the Indian Government.” (1981-82 Varanasi participant).
**Student Survey Question # 5**

What were the high/low points of your year in four broad categories: personally, technologically, historically, academically?

The replies to this question reflect the very individual ways in which students responded to the circumstances they encountered in India. For most, it was the first time in a non-Western country. The selected replies are therefore printed in their entirety demonstrating how in some cases, the same situations were experienced differently by individuals. For example, the long time-lag of postal mail and the challenges with booking phone calls in the earlier pre-internet/cell phone decades of the program were, depending on the individual, a source of loneliness, or encouraged deeper reflection in framing remarks, or created a liberating feeling. Most students described periods of bad health, though a few said they were healthy throughout, with one student mentioning that only eating food from street carts left him feeling under the weather. The descriptions of personal and professional growth differ in content but virtually all students describe insights gained, maturity achieved, and worldview expanded.

Experiencing world events while residing outside America seemed to add an intensity to many students’ perception and understand of the events. In the early decades of the program, students describe an overwhelming friendliness to them as Americans; later participants describe their warm welcome in India more in terms of individual interactions rather than their having any special status as Americans. The cohort of students is variously overlooked, described as an important source of support while in India, or a source of lifelong friends and in some cases of a lifelong partner.

The low points include loneliness, ill-health, feelings of cultural inadequacy, for women, being the victims of ‘eve-teasing’, and/or unsatisfactory academic experience. Yet every statement included numerous high points with descriptors including: ‘miraculous, life-changing, learned to think, most intense educational and period of personal growth of my life, making some very good Indian friends, the kindness, hospitality, music, dancing, clothing, colors, and (saving the best for last) the food, and it continues to be the biggest influence on my life ever since.’

The best summary statement may be: “My Year was a thousand stories, mostly good, and incredibly useful for the next 40 years.”

**Delhi participants**

“Clearly, the junior program had some of the highest and some of the very lowest points in my life. Personally, I was thrust into a situation quite different from Madison that enticed and forced me to develop self-reliance empathy and survival skills. What a blessing.
The low points included an intense sense of loneliness –– I spoke English as did the Indian students but we were so terribly different from each other that it was hard to deeply communicate. Similarly, the Saturday Review article fully describes the way our group withdrew to our own housing in order to feel a sense of comfort and survival. Health issues were also a serious matter. Had it not been for a British missionary doctor, our year would have been substantially more of a challenge. As it was, I lost 30 pounds and lived on bananas, oranges, chocolate protein extract, and British biscuits for nearly 2 months.

But the high points were truly miraculous. Traveling on third class trains for 5,000k across India opened doors of many kinds. My travel for a week in October to Kashmir was one of the high points of the year, but there are so many travel and personal experiences that it would take many pages to capture that rich set of joys and new insights.

The friendships with several students at Delhi University and in my field side were deeply wonderful. The joy and the resilience of these people was truly amazing. I loved their generosity, empathy, and often puzzling perspectives on life. My group of American students traveled to Rajasthan to attend the Muslim wedding of close friend and student at Gwyer Hall. The evening before the wedding, we Americans were given the gift of talking with the bride, who had never met the groom on the eve of their wedding.

The technology of communicating back to United States was very demanding. This was the year before emails texts and Facebook. We lived for and suffered with handwritten letters that took 10 days to two weeks to get delivered tonight states. The return letters
off and responded to how it felt to years ago two weeks ago. Once during the year, I
tried to phone my parents—the phone connections were truly terrible.

Of course there are many stories about challenges with banking and money communication. One
day, MC managed to keep a local bank open because she had taken home a metal numbered chit
that was needed at the end of the day to allow the bank to close. At the end of the year, getting
rupees shifted to dollars was the last of many issues in currency exchange--oh, the stories we
could tell.

But speaking of communication, we were also challenged when we went to the
American Embassy parties. Staff there were forever asking us what the “real India” was
like. We found experience so disconcerting that we stop going to the parties.
But the historical context of that year is extremely important. That was one of the last
years of Nehru’s life. When we watched him in the parliament and when stood near him
on a review dais, we knew that he was one of the most impressive people we had ever
been close to.

This was also the JFK era and we were very proud to be a part of that America. So the
shock of JFK’s assassination was doubly stunning to us while we were in Delhi. I
remember vividly and will always remember the compassion shown by Indian
colleagues and the service at the American Embassy.” (1963-64 participant)

“The high points: PERSONALLY – I learned to think, opened myself up to see so much
and sharpened by observation skills and sensitivity to poverty and the people behind in those
jhugghi jhompris [squatter area homes], I stayed there often overnight.
Also the politics of Vietnam and the US and Asian feelings about us became part of my learning due to all our discussions, the books I read [I truly learned to think and read in a way I had not to that date].

Also the winter holiday I toured the entire country by extending my round-the-world ticket for $26 and then with black market funds had enough and friends and connections to go to Bombay, Ahmedabad, Kerala [with helped got across to the mountains and plantations there from a Jewish man Kodor – head of plantations in Kerala,], got to the elephant preserve of periyar, to Mysore, to Hyderabad, to madras and Madurai, and home. Much was via all sorts of people I met, friends of family or this one Jewish man kodor, and just meeting people en route. Part was with an Israel postdoc to Kerala, the rest was my being alone or with a companion. But I saw India.

As we had return round-trip tickets, I was one of the few who selected Asia. And I used a $100 and went home via all Asian countries [Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore [met Japanese student who arrange a stay at his village family home for 3 weeks], visited PCV classmate from UW in the Philippines, got to Jakarta, Hong Kong, Kyoto and nara, gifu and the village, Tokyo and home. I learned so much. So in general intellectually this was a major revolution for me and I grew immensely.

TECHNOLOGICALLY: This was very difficult. I was there in 65-66 before email. there were only snail mail and telegraphs. We had to book a call to reach home and that took half a day. There was no banking. I got checks and American Express was my life saver.

HISTORICALLY: this was the time when Shastri died and Indira Gandhi became prime minister. I participated in these events.
This was also the year of an Indo-Pakistan war. I experienced the blackouts, saw dogfights in planes over Delhi, had to appear before the panchayat for my squatter area to attest to not being a CIA spy several times, was there when a black member of the group was arrested for being a spy.

Finally the group organized a Vietnam blockage of the US embassy. This grew into a national and global affair. While I was at that time a bit player in all this I learned a great deal, had my CIA interviews, had my parents suffer financially for this [my dad had a small store in superior Wisconsin, and actually got drafted as a result of this though I was still in college.

The LOWS: I went there after a year of intense therapy to help me overcome some depressive elements. I had some points of alienation. Also I got amoebic dysentery very early and was knocked out for several days on an IV. And every 2 weeks or so I got serious diarrhea in my squatter work and returned to the US as a scarecrow. I had to accept water from families and refuse proffered tea they would go out and buy as I learned that the tea they offered was a huge part of their salary.” (1965-66 participant)

“This was one of three years I spent at South Asian Universities - University of Ceylon, University of Delhi and Punjab University in Lahore. These were three years filled almost exclusively with high points ---- high, higher, and highest, I suppose.

Apart from a few bouts of amoebic I really can't recall any lows in those three years. The advantages of being a foreigner in South Asia in the 60s hugely outweighed any disadvantages. Almost everyone was willing to talk to a foreigner. When I frequented the poorer, seamier parts of Delhi and other North Indian Cities I was sometimes mistaken for a Russian ---- they had deployed many more Hindi speaking officers than the USG and I found this
mis-identity was often useful in getting people to tell me things they might not have shared with an American.

Communications technology was wonderfully simple. I had my small, reliable Swiss Hermes typewriter. I had blue aerogrammes for communicating with family and with my faculty friends at Cornell. I had a pile of domestic telegram forms that allowed me to communicate with anyone anywhere in India for one rupee. My telegram was usually delivered (1000km away) within hours by a chap in khaki shorts on a bicycle.

One truly could not ask for anything better in terms of communications IT. The one-month turn-around on aerogrammes to American correspondents was a blessing. It allowed for thoughtful exchanges and time to absorb new information before writing again.

5B) historically: events in India, US, elsewhere, academically: next steps, careers

All times are historic, but Sept 65 to June 66 was pretty significant in India. We arrived at the outset of the 17-day Indo Pak war (Pak piloted American Sabre Jets over Delhi, valiant Indian pilots overmatched in their Hunter jets trying to shoot them down). My program friend Sue Jacobs said she wanted to "see the war" and I organized an assuredly ill-advised but memorable venture for the two of us to Pathankote where we could see the artillery exchanges from both Armies). On January 11, 1965 Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri died in a Soviet dacha in Tashkent. His family and much of the Indian left believed he had been poisoned on the orders of Indira Gandhi (wholly in -character proposition, but highly unlikely. In a land of conspiracy theories, however, it had great traction). Indira's ascent to power that winter rocked the political establishment in India. Despite her famous father, she was all but unknown.
I took the opportunity to write two articles about the political changeover for small American journals and got them both published --- greatly upsetting the in-country program Director, Dr Robert Holmes, about whom the less said the better.

Academically, at the end of the program in the summer of 1965 I would have guessed an academic trajectory a bit like Dr Christine Fair - centered on South Asian politics and security affairs. But despite my three years at South Asian Universities I never became a certified South Asian academic. I went off to the Indo-China war for four years in the mountains of Laos, went back to grad school at Cornell in the govt and econ departments. While in grad school I managed to get all sorts of short-term government funded tasks that took me back to Asia and kept my eye off the ball of getting a PhD. Finally, I recognized the inevitable. I wasn't destined for academe, I like government and I like overseas operations too much.

I wound up with a very long and happy career in the Foreign Service as an Arabist/Islamic guy. The arc did lead back to Islamic South Asia, as I spent ~15 years in Afghanistan (pre-war) and Pakistan, along with tours in Yemen, Tunisia, Syria and Egypt (twice). I married in Egypt and both my kids were born in Cairo. My daughter is now a Foreign Service Officer Arabist and my son is a lawyer leading a counter-terrorist team for Homeland Security. I am now happily retired with my Egyptian wife of almost forty years in Chevy Chase and living vicariously through the exploits of my children.” (1965-66 participant)

In 1965 there were no computers. Telephone communications between the U.S. and India were problematic...we had to "book" a time through an international operator in advance. The signal was weak, so I really couldn't hear anyone on the other end of the line when I would, for example, call my parents. As a result, I communicated the old- fashioned way--handwritten letters mostly to my parents and a few of my friends. I treasure those letters, which were vivid
and alive and because they were composed by hand on a mailer that was nowhere near large enough, every square inch of paper was filled with my handwriting. I felt completely cut off from the U.S. and was glad of it. These days, when I travel abroad, it's like I've never left home, talking everyday easily via cellphone, sending emails, reading the papers in the U.S. on the Internet. I think that sense of being--I used to say "on another planet"--was perhaps the best part of the year in India. I got sick from time to time largely because we all went out and ate street food with abandon. It was unpleasant but not constant.

Highpoints: Being uninhibited; riding our bikes through the streets of old Delhi; mingling easily with the throngs at Chandni Chowk; sitting under a bridge trying to play the tabla with a bunch of old men, who were remarkably tolerant and welcoming; joining in a wedding procession to which we were not invited yet being accepted as honored guests by the family; stumbling into a Muslim circumcision ceremony, which also included a long and joyous procession, and being welcomed. These are the kinds of things nobody told us not to do...as they would do now...so we did them. I do remember an older man speaking to me during one of these occasions and saying, in a nice way, protectively, "you shouldn't be here." I didn't know what he meant until I got back to my dorm and realized my pocket had been picked and my watch stolen during the jostling of that procession. Against all advice, I tried desperately to date Indian women from one of the women's colleges. I made little headway beyond flirtations, which made me long even more for an Indian girlfriend. That didn't happen but the effort was worth it and quite an experience. Of course, there was a brief war between India and Pakistan while we were there which seemed very exciting to me; blackouts; air raid sirens; fighter jets streaking through the sky. I should have been frightened to death but I didn't know any better.
Academically: The course in Indian political theory was worthless, the professor an anti-American radical who spent have the class trying to bait me. The Hindi teacher hired for us was also worthless, a man named Mr. Jain, as I recall; a very formal man who wanted us to read the great classics. Apart then from the field work and the thesis, the formal academic experience was not much; yet I learned more that year than any year before or since, just from being there. Professionally, though I did not know it at the time, the experience set me up for a career in journalism. When I went off to the East-West Center in Honolulu after I graduated on a grant that included another year in India, I used my previous experience there to convince Adam Clymer of the Baltimore Sun that I could be useful to him, that I knew my way around India, and that, unlike him, I could actually utter a few words of Hindi. He took me on as a free "intern." That led to a job offer from the Baltimore Sun and a rewarding career in journalism. So I literally owe my livelihood to the Wisconsin Year in India program. (1965-66 participant).

“I was in Delhi. I became lifelong friends with the program directors, Dick and Anna Carol Dudley. I had access to great museums and cultural centers not to mention one of the most monument rich landscapes in India. I became friends with Ruth Jhabvala and through her met her husband Cyrus and V S Naipaul, two very complicated and interesting men. Politics at Delhi University kept closing the university so I had ample opportunity to travel all over north and south India. I still use photographs I took then in my teaching. And I saw many great monuments before their setting were altered by development and population pressure.

On the down side I suffered with amoebic dysentery. I was tested for hepatitis in Bombay on my 21st birthday but fortunately I was negative. I liked feeling out of touch--no tv, letters took a while back and forth, long distance calls were so difficult as to be pointless except in
emergency--those were joys of travel for me. To be on my own in a fascinating place and made to reflect on it through letter writing was truly wonderful.

One thing led to another--I have a PhD in South Asian Art History from the University of Chicago and I teach at the University of Virginia. I’ve lost count of the number of times I've been to India, and it never bores me. I'll die before I see everything I want to see. As Kipling wrote in Christmas in India, "If a year of life be lent her, if her temple's shrine we enter, The door is shut--we may not look behind." (1970-71 participant).

Hyderabad participants

About CYI ‘64-‘65, it was probably the most important academic year in my life, utterly amazing. I had gone to Wellesley thinking that I wanted to focus on medieval Europe in my studies (though I dared not think about getting a doctorate at that stage). A dry as dust history teacher in my freshman year two-semester course in medieval history put an end to that. When I arrived in India, I felt that I had gone back in time with lower levels of technology and complicated systems of relationships. The physical aspect - buildings, clothing, architecture, animals, skies - got to me. It was all enchanting. India got under my skin and would not let me go. The CYI program had a small library which I made good use of, and I came to realize that, contrary to what I thought, libraries (including my college library!) were inadequate: there was so much to learn that had not yet been written about. So the CYI made a researcher out of me. It was exciting that we CYI students were given the responsibility of doing a research project which was a major portion of our program. The program at that point had the money to hire an interpreter for me and a van to take the two of us out to a village where I engaged in interviewing. I was twenty years old and I had my ‘own village’! Amazing!
The CYI dictated the course of the rest of my life. Apart from going on to do research and writing about India, I engaged in institution-building activities in the Nordic region. For example, when I got to the University of Oslo, one of my long-term goals was to make it possible for Norwegian/Nordic undergraduates to spend time studying in India. To that end I put a lot of time and energy into the establishment of the Nordic Centre in India, with one of its major duties being to facilitate student study in India.

Personally I enjoyed being with the other students on the program, but I wished later that I had spent more time with Indian students. I had an Indian roommate who was a Christian and I remember my disappointment at walking for the first time into the room we shared and seeing a big 'portrait' of Jesus over her bed. I was a Unitarian and felt little in common with a devout Christian. Let's just say that we did not bond. I did, though, have very rewarding contact with people in the village. It was that experience (the village research) which probably propelled me most toward a lifetime of reading and writing about India. I stayed in contact with two of the women from my year on the CYI program for many years. All in all, it is the people whom I have met through my India connections who have meant the most to me in my life. (1964-65 Osmania participant)

We were in India in momentous times. We landed in Delhi at the start of the Pakistani-India war in blackout conditions. Prime Minister Shastri died during that year. And the American Vietnam war was heating up leading to members of our group demonstrating in New Delhi against U.S. involvement in the war. But our cohort in Hyderabad was fairly isolated from these major events. Looking back, what was striking of the times was the large remaining influence of the Nizam’s earlier rule in Hyderabad, ending only 15 years before. I remember our group was invited soon after our arrival to a feast hosted by a wealthy Muslim family and,
starving students as we were, we gobbled a huge amount of fabulous food presented to us only to find out that this was just the appetizers before the main courses were to appear.

The technology of the time was a British-style red round mailbox and each letter to our families and friends, back and forth, took about two weeks. There were newspapers for local India news and we would occasionally run into an International Herald Tribune but we were effectively cut off from media and the rest of the world. And that was fine with me. I was totally immersed into this new culture and wanted to live it fully and not feel my feet half planted back in U.S. soil. I did not make a phone call home the entire year as it was very expensive and the only money I had was the $50/month stipend we were given in rupees which I saved for travel.

The entire year was a time of adventure, exploration and growth for me. I remained in good health (although eating street food without a thought). I traveled by third class rail, sleeping on the luggage racks, on trips across India, often by myself and sometimes with my group friends. We would emerge from our journeys on the steam trains covered with black soot. During those trips, and during journeys on land throughout India, we would be treated with great hospitality, meeting families and invited to join in meals, sometimes by people who could ill afford to give up food to others but with a light in their eyes and a graciousness that is hard to find these days in a more global community.

The entire year was a highpoint in my life. I remember listening to unworldly classical music with my friends at the Madras Music Festival, walking along Elliot’s beach on a warm Christmas Eve with phosphorescent waves lapping at our feet, entering the great South Indian temples and feeling the millennia of reverence, getting lost in the alleys of Varanasi with my friends and boating on the Ganges in the early morning with the splash of ritual bathers and the smell of the funeral pyres, sitting on a hill by a palace overlooking the sparkling city of Jaipur,
cool fog in Darjeeling covering the tea plantations, the stillness of our houseboat on a lake in Kashmir with the moon glinting on the water, and the rhythmic creak of the bicycle rickshaw as it carried me home in a quiet evening.

There were some awkward and stressful times as well: finding out the clothes were were wearing were for pre-pubescent girls, not college women; learning to eat properly with my right hand; being manhandled in a large crowd on a festival day and often groped on crowded buses; being propositioned by taxi drivers who saw movies that led them to believe all American women were available at the right price (this was before much movie censorship came to India); and seeing the great poverty and difficult living conditions of so many people. I was never lonely or homesick and certainly never bored. And I have since that time always been grateful for what I have been given in life.

And this was only the beginning of my life-long association with India. I changed my major and received a BA in Indian Studies from UW and then went on to graduate school in South Asian Studies at UC Berkeley, receiving a Fulbright Fellowship which took me back to Madras and the study of Tamil linguistics a few years later. My life took off in other directions, I married, had children, and I eventually became an attorney and active in the Inter-Pacific Bar Association, a group of mainly Asian lawyers. Through them, I organized the first conference for Indian women lawyers which took place in Delhi in 2010 and which has led to the creation of SOWL, the Society of Women Lawyers in India. I travel to India often, visiting friends I have known since 1965, and since retiring from my legal practice now run a tour company, Varya Tours, which leads tours to India and Asia, sharing my knowledge and love of Indian and Asian culture with others. I became a life-long vegetarian in 1968, influenced by the philosophy and respect for life I found in India. My love for Asia must have carried over into my home life as
both of my children married wonderful Asian women, one from Vietnam and one from Malaysia.
(Simpson 1965-66 Osmania participant)

Personally

Having already spent a year abroad, I feel I was well prepared for my experiences on the Year in India Program. Though I had lived in Israel and traveled in Jordan and Turkey, India was on an entirely different scale in terms of the differences from Western society, the size of its cities, the complexities of its religions, the variety of its monuments, and the number of its languages. And I found it thoroughly exciting and exhilarating. I was very careful about what I would eat, though I ate at local restaurants, and luckily did not have health problems other than an occasional allergic reaction to soot spewed by steam locomotives when traveling by rail. Here’s how I described that situation in a letter home.

Indian trains are coal burning and so soot (in huge hunks as well as thin layer of grits) settles on everything. Reading my History of South India became a process of reading a paragraph and then wiping off the soot then reading then wiping.

I learned a lot about bargaining, dealing with beggars, and coping with touts. I became used to traveling on third class trains, sleeping in luggage racks, staying in local hotels. The program’s monthly stipend of Rs. 300 ($40 at the time) was very adequate in terms of its buying power within India (some meals in local restaurants could cost as little as Rs. 1.50; a stay at a hotel around Rs. 15; and a long-distance train ticket Rs. 25). The rooms in the student hostel had mosquito nets but mosquitoes were so abundant that we had to open the window screens in the morning to let them out. When I first arrived at Osmania, I remember our local program head Prof. Bhadriraju (Bh.) Krishnamurti picking up a large black telephone receiver and six
mosquitoes flew out. On one annoying occasion I had to deal with bedbugs, which I treated with DDT powder.

Another negative experience of a different magnitude I would mention was a train derailment in India on May 21, 1967, after the program was over. I had an air ticket from Madras (Chennai) to Cochin where I had planned to meet a member of the program [Paul Groner] to travel together in Southeast Asia. When I went to the Indian Airlines office to confirm my reservation, they informed me that my seat was no longer available and that they had booked me an alternative—a second class rail ticket on an overnight express. So I set out on that train, leaving in the late afternoon. After the sun went down, my fellow compartment members turned in to go to sleep. I unrolled my sleeping bag and went to sleep. At around ten o’clock in the evening the train, which was going quite fast, made an extremely sudden jerking halt, throwing people off their bunks onto the floor. It halted and we wondered who had pulled the emergency stop cord. We heard a hissing noise in the pitch-black darkness—steam escaping.

After a while, passengers started getting out of their railcars and walking around. Wondering what happened, I also got out and walked toward the front of the train. I soon discovered that the train had derailed. The first two railcars packed with third class passengers were bizarrely upended and had accordioned into the steam locomotive. People began trying to help extricate injured passengers. Some were putting people on makeshift stretchers made of signboards from the side of the train. I imagined it was like being in a war zone after a bomb hit a residential area. Oddly there were too many grotesque scenes to react emotionally. One just worked to help as best one could. I tried to assist the carrying of stretchers, but the fellow passengers refused to let me, seeming to feel it was beneath my status as a foreigner to be near death and blood. I gave away a blanket of mine to one injured passenger squatting with shivering
hands upheld whom I tried to comfort, saw someone moaning flat on the ground with a leg gashed open its entire length, and thought I saw what looked like a dead fellow westerner, but wasn’t sure.

Soon I witnessed injured people being taken to a rudimentary health clinic in an adjacent village [Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh] and placed on some concrete slabs where people were given morphine to control their pain. We waited for hours until the middle of the next day when a relief train arrived to take us on to our destination, Cochin, Kerala. In the newspaper *The Hindu* the following day it was reported that some sixty people had been killed. I was uninjured but mentally traumatized from what I had seen and realizing that normally I would have been in the third class cars rather than the second class one that the airline had put me in. I had an incredible migraine headache continually for the next two or three days, even when I tried to sleep. I met up with my traveling companion, but for many decades firmly avoided sitting in the first two cars of a subway or railway train.

*Technologically*

I communicated with home solely by mail and had an agreement with my mother to save all of my letters, which I used as journal entries describing my latest experiences and adventures. Looking over those letters I spotted a comment that it had taken me 45 minutes to send a particular letter registered. Another place, I mention how time consuming it was to send a package. One had to buy cloth to wrap it in, take it to a tailor to sew it up, seal the stitches with sealing wax, and take it to the city’s only parcel post office—a very time consuming process. In another letter I mentioned a failed attempt to make an international phone call—sitting fruitlessly by a phone in my advisor’s home for six and a half hours. I used the address of Bob Holmes in New Delhi for receiving mail at the end of the program and American Express offices in various
cities I visited while traveling home through Southeast and East Asia. American Express was also a way of receiving money from home via travellers cheques. I would add that the round the world air ticket that was part of the program enabled me to route my way back to the U.S. over several months via Ceylon [Sri Lanka], Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan. Visiting those countries was an amazing experience that opened up more of the world to me. I discovered the influence of Indian culture in Southeast Asia, such as Sanskrit words in Bahasa Indonesia, as well as Hindu and Buddhist iconography in such venerable ancient monuments in Indonesia and Cambodia as Borobudur, Prambanan, and Angkor Wat.

**Historically**

One fascinating historical event I witnessed while on the program was the death of the Nizam of Hyderabad, Osman Ali Khan Asaf Jah VII, on February 24, 1967. Absolutely immense crowds of his former subjects, noblemen, and followers gathered outside the palace where he lay in state. It was evident that “the king had died.” I went with my German friend, Pippo, to get a glimpse of him, but the enormous crowds were being held back by lathi-wielding police and they repelled us from cutting into the line. Then we noticed a stream of dignitaries drawing up in cars at the entrance gate and parading directly in. We realized that as westerners we could get in by just following them and acting perfectly calmly as if we were very important and belonged. It worked! We saw the nizam lying in state surrounded by Muslim clerics chanting prayers. It was absolutely fascinating to see this end of an era. Though the nizam had been estimated to have been the world’s richest man in the 1930s, he was widely gossiped about by my fellow Indian students as being stingy, using a huge diamond as a paperweight, and walking around in a slovenly way with an egg-stained sherwani jacket. There was a link between the generosity of a ruler and his high status. Obviously his status had precipitously declined when the newly
independent Indian government forcibly took over the former princely state of Hyderabad in the “police action” of September 1948.

Another historical event took place early in our stay at Osmania University, and it was associated in a sense with the former Hyderabad State. Students went out on strike for numerous days, agitating for a separate Telangana State, to be split off from Andhra Pradesh. Telangana had been the Telugu-speaking region of the domains of the nizam, which had been merged with the former British ruled Telugu-speaking area of coastal Andhra (split from Madras in 1951) to form Andhra Pradesh in 1956. Classes were canceled during the strike. I remember collecting a flag used by demonstrators with the name Telangana silkscreened on it in Telugu. That agitation finally ended with nothing happening at the time. However, 47 years later in 2013, Telangana actually did succeed in separating from Andhra Pradesh to become the 29th state.

Another agitation I remember was for protection of cows—the banning of cow slaughter. Demonstrators handed out fliers in Telugu, of which I collected one. I mention this because it has recently become a hot issue in the news in present-day India, with cow slaughter banned in several states and people being attacked after being suspected of killing a cow.

I will throw in as a footnote other historical events I had a brush with on my way back to the U.S. in the summer of 1967. When I left Cambodia on my way to Hong Kong, I met a young woman who had been working for the West German embassy in Phnom Penh. She told me that she could hear explosions from the Vietnam War (possibly the Ho Chi Minh Trail) and that she was aware of local Cambodian employees surreptitiously going to fight at the front at night time.

When I got to Hong Kong I witnessed demonstrations that were part of the Cultural Revolution on the mainland. Angry groups of people marched and shouted on certain streets that one had to avoid. The New Territories were off limits, and in souvenir shops operated by the
Peoples Republic one could see elaborate displays of Chairman Mao’s portrait in the center of streaming rays of red bunting and buy copies of the Little Red Book of his quotes.

Then when I was in Indonesia, there were very few tourists because of the so-called Konfrontasi, in which Indonesia had been opposing the creation of Malaysia out of the former British colonies of Malaya and Borneo. Also, large sections of Indonesian towns had boarded up shops that had belonged to Chinese merchants, against whom there had been murderous riots the previous year. (This is all not to mention the race riots in Detroit that I heard about in the news and the Six Day War in the Middle East that summer of 1967. My mother, an artist, had recently purchased a studio in an old Armenian house in the Old City of Jaffa, Israel, where she had plans to spend six months every year. As war threatened, she left the country for Greece. It was around the time I was traveling in Ceylon.)

I would also note some observations on my visit to Ceylon [Sri Lanka], the first stop after leaving India once the program was over. I encountered statements of discontent by the mainly Hindu Tamils that they were being discriminated against by the majority Buddhist Sinhalese who had passed the Sinhala Only Act of 1956 that restricted access to government jobs to those fluent in Sinhalese language. These feelings exploded in later years with the vicious civil war from 1983 to 2009.

Academically

I have already commented above on the influence of my project in the Year in India Program on my subsequent academic work, my doctorate, and subsequent publications. After graduating, I taught social anthropology at the University of Adelaide in Australia for two years, traveling back to India and my research village during the Australian summer. I returned to the U.S.—New York City, my hometown—in 1978 but unfortunately encountered a severe
contraction in American academic jobs. I participated in the Columbia University Southern
Asian Institute and reworked some of my research writings. Eventually I realized I needed a new
career and got a master’s from the Columbia University School of Journalism. My first
journalism job took me to the Washington, DC area as a reporter on new technology—early
experiments in computer communications—precursors of the internet, the worldwide web, and
email. From there I worked as an editor at the Smithsonian Institution (including the Freer and
Sackler Galleries), the Library of Congress, the American Occupational Therapy Association (a
son from my first marriage turned out to have autism); and ten years at the U.S. Holocaust
Memorial Museum, from which I retired in 2012. (1966-67 Osmania paticipant)

High points first. My time in India was the most intense educational and period of
personal growth of my life. I believe that to be universal among CYIPers. I found being in
Hyderabad and travel within India to be exciting, stimulating, interesting and frustrating. I value
the friendships forged there. When we held our reunion in 2008, the importance of our shared
experience became much clearer to me.

I felt at the time, and still feel that I learned more about my own culture than Indian
culture. I believe I developed more tolerance for others. I grew up in a close family in a small
college town in Iowa and attended a college laboratory school with people much like myself.
This was the first time I experienced living as a minority. I also learned to observe and pick up
cultural clues which have helped me throughout my adult life.

The absolute separation from home and family made me, by necessity, more independent
and self-reliant—this was 1968-69—no computers, communication was only by letter. I learned that
I had more resilience than I imagined and I could deal with most situations without panic.
I was quite proud of the fact that I never became ill in India. I took only the same precautions as others, but felt I emerged from the experience stronger than I had thought.

My interest in India led to my decision to go to graduate school. Once there, I decided that I did not want to pursue an academic career, so I applied for the Foreign Service, passed the exam and was accepted, but because of a hiring freeze, I was not offered an appointment. Following graduate school, I married and then attended law school. I spent my career as an attorney in private practice and then primarily as a prosecutor. Because my community is very diverse, I value the immersion I experienced in Indian culture.

Low points included intense loneliness for family and friends at home. I experienced the usual frustrations of living in India—the crowds, the vast disparity in wealth, and things that I observed as casual cruelty to others. For reasons I don't really understand now, visits to the Post Office were the most trying for me. I was there frequently to mail letters home, and also to mail camera film back to Kodak. The lines and general inefficiency drove me crazy! 1968-69 was a strange time to be away from the US. The Vietnam War was raging, and I had always been opposed to that particular foreign policy. The riots and assassinations were very unsettling. The news available to me made me think that I no longer knew my own country. My return was more difficult in many ways than I expected. (1968-69 participant)

I learned it’s ok to be frequently sick. I learned you have to be careful - just because your money, class and skin color all lead to special treatment doesn’t actually mean you are, though it’s great to think so. I learned the noble path of patience and acquiescence from the check cashing department of the State Bank of India, and I found my path in life. Not bad for a college year I’d say… (1968-69 participant)
I have a hard time conceiving of any of the experiences I had as low points. The things that were the most difficult at the time (witnessing poverty and depravation, homesickness, contracting Giardia right before going on a cross-country train trip by myself (a true low point), and even moments of real fear - getting off a train in the middle of the night in Lucknow by myself and having to talk my way into a bed in the women's-only area of the train station, b/c there was no way I was traveling into town by myself at that time of night; getting off a bus by the side of the road in the dark, wee hours of the morning to wait for a relative of an acquaintance to (fingers crossed!) walk from his village to meet me, and attending a celebration in Hyderabad that quickly turned into a men-only crush and we had to quickly extricate ourselves from a mob) made me a more compassionate, resolute, resilient person. The high points - the kindness, hospitality, music, dancing, clothing, colors, and (saving the best for last) the food! (1996-97 participant)

**Madurai participants**

Frankly, CYI ’78-’79 stays in my mind mostly as the opportunity which it gave me to pursue further my own research into culture and society in southern Tamil Nadu and to finish writing on my dissertation, published many years later as a monograph with Cambridge University Press.

In those days, lines of communication between India and the U.S. were very limited. There was no Internet and telephone communication was difficult. If I wanted to call my parents, I would have to go to a neighbor’s house where there was a telephone and I would “book a call” to the U.S. through the Operator. Then I would have to spend the whole day, waiting around to see when the phone call had gone through and my neighbor would hurry over to my house to
summon me to her house when the call finally came through. Because of the hassle of that, I think I may have only spoken to my parents by phone two or three times during the whole year and I never spoke with friends in the U.S. But we wrote lots of letters and mine were all written on light blue Aerograms. Once when my parents needed to contact me urgently, they sent a telegram which was a thin slip of paper with a few words which was hand delivered to me. So as far as communication with the U.S. went, we were really very much on our own for that entire year.

Since there were only seven of us who were in Madurai as American college students on the UW program, we all got to know each other very well. John Loud was our “monitor” from the U.S. who stayed with us throughout the year. He was a classical South Indian Carnatic singer and each of also took our own separate classes in music, dance, or yoga. I was in a classical South Indian Bharatanatyam dance class. I always stood in the back of the class, towering over the five or six other students who ranged in age from three to ten and who were already far more adept at Bharatanatyam than I could ever dream to be. But I loved the class and I continued to study Bharatanatyam for two more years after I returned to the U.S. One of my research assistants on my current project here in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, is taking Bharatanatyam classes and yesterday we attended the ceremonial opening of her dance teacher’s studio. So I am lucky to still have opportunities to watch this highly expressive dance form today.

M.G. Ramachandran (MGR) was the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu while I was on the UW Year in India program and he had widespread support throughout the state. His support came both from the fact that his party emerged from the Dravidian political movement in Tamil Nadu and from his popularity as a former Tamil film star. Living in Tamil Nadu at that time gave
me an appreciation for how unique each state in India is politically, culturally and linguistically and the significance that language often comes to have in ethnic and national identity formation. And it gave me insight into the powerful role that film has in Tamil politics. Ronald Reagan was the president of the Unites States during my year in Madurai so the connection between cinematic and political stardom was not all together new to me but in Tamil Nadu this connection is taken to an entirely different level. The current Chief Minister, J. Jayalalithaa, also came to power through film, acting alongside MGR back in the day. And the two most famous Tamil movie stars during my year in Madurai—Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth—are still acting today. When their films are released there is an outpouring of adoration from their fans. Two weeks ago Rajinikanth’s film Kabali was released while I was in Chennai and there was a frenzy as people desperately tried to get tickets to see the first screening of the film on the first day of its release. Many businesses closed to mark the opening day of the film and fans poured buckets of milk over cut-out posters of Rajinkanth as a form of abhishekam for a Hindu god. None of this would have made sense to me if I did not have the long-term perspective gained from my year in Madurai in the mid-1980s. (1986-87participant)

I didn’t struggle the way some folks did. I was comfortable and delighted to be in Madurai. I enjoyed the immersion process and the relationships and learning enabled through sustained stays. Communication was hard—hardly any telephones at that time, let alone ISDs—but letter writing was relished. Computers weren’t a thing at the time. Banking was a challenge—many logistical things were—but not insurmountable. I have nothing but positive memories from my CYIP year. When I go back to India now, I cannot but remark over and over “it’s SO EASY NOW!” (1988-89 respondent)
**Personally:** I had a fantastic year. It was undoubtedly the best year of my undergraduate career and one of the most formative years of my life. India was very easy for me and I didn't want to come home. Consequently, I stayed a few extra months to continue my work and read. I felt well prepared for the experience and I loved the warmth of everything from the people to the food to the climate. I also didn't take for granted the luxury of focusing only on my academic work while in India because in the U.S., I worked at least twenty hours a week during the semester and then still managed my studies, which I loved most. In addition to staying on in Madurai, I spent one month in Sri Lanka with close friends (both Tamil and Singhalese) once the program ended. During the Winter break I was invited to stay with the mother of a close friend from the U.S. in Delhi, which was another rich and fulfilling experience where I learned a ton about the history, religion, and culture of northern India. In Madurai, our program staff was great and I lived with a kind family who I loved very much and remain in contact with now (thirteen years later). We had excellent food at our program house and our local and international friends and family were always welcomed warmly. In terms of the program, I felt fortunate to have every detail of our lives taken care of—even when I got very sick with viral fever, Seker came to take me to the doctor and then checked in on me personally and through the family I was living with. Our cook, especially Karuthamma, was wonderful and very caring and affectionate towards me—she also took care of me when I was very sick with viral fever and throughout the year, joked with me a lot. I always felt safe and taken care of that respect was the only expectation. Throughout the program I enjoyed our guest speakers and field trips immensely.

**Technologically:** Times have changed a lot in the almost fifteen years since I completed the program. We had two computers in the program house and though I couldn't go without a computer now, I managed alright that year without my own computer and sharing those two
computers. My Tamil, yoga tutorials, and fieldwork were my priority and I took prolific handwritten notes and found less need for the computers. There was descent Internet cafe nearby the program house and within short biking distance from my home, so I occasionally (and inexpensively) used those computers and/or called my family and friends from there when I necessary. In general I'm independent and have always had to be, so I usually only called 'home' when absolutely necessary. My grandmother to whom I am closest, called me regularly at the program house and tried sending me packages—ne of which never arrived.

**Banking:** That year, I used travelers’ checks, which worked out very well. I biked to Janake Forex once per month and withdrew money for the next thirty days. They had good rates and were trustworthy, reliable, and efficient. I was fortunate to have a scholarship as well as some help from my grandmother, which allowed me to take the cash I needed for the entire year.

**Professionally/Careerwise:** After completing the WI program I returned to Madison and completed my B.A. and M.A. degrees in South Asian Studies. It was absolutely incredible to study in India and then return home and figure out what I had learned and its significance with the most skilled scholars and teachers in the field. My professors were exceptional-above and beyond above and beyond—and they always gave me time and talked with me in-depth about my work. The care and interest they expressed in me and my work helped me value myself and my work and the contribution I'd someday make to the academy. I knew my training in Madison was excellent and I was fulfilled, yet being a Wisconsin native, I didn't realize the full extent of just how excellent it was until years later—and I still realize and continue to appreciate my training and the wonderful faculty who gave me it.
I was selected as a Fulbright scholar as a graduating senior at Madison though with many other scholars that year, I never received government of India approval due to significant problems with the GOI approval process that year. I finished my MA a year later at Madison, completed the AIIS Advanced Punjabi language program in Patiala, and then moved to South Carolina with my now Punjabi Husband who was working as a scientist. I was hired as a lecturer (Teaching Associate) at Coastal Carolina University, where I taught three classes a semester and designed my own courses. After leaving South Carolina, I taught for several more universities and colleges until finally applying to finish my PhD at Ohio State in Columbus, OH where I currently live. I've taught my own classes at Ohio State for the past three years and received a teaching award last spring. Last semester John Cort also invited me to work as a visiting instructor at Denison University. Teaching at Denison was a great experience and John (a former CYIP student and monitor) remains a wonderful mentor and professional support for me. We meet from time to time and frequently share stories about the Program, India, and Dr. Elder. (2002-03 participant)

Personally - The high was learning and mastering Karagattam - a Tamil folk dance that requires the performer to balance a brass pot on his head while dancing to choreography, free form dancing, and sometimes completing circus like events (or feats of balance). Since the UW program I performed Karagattam in several professional venues in India, the US, Nepal, and Pakistan. Lows include poor health, loneliness, and homesickness. (Although the cooks of the program Karthamma and Muthamma were extremely helpful in helping me overcome both.) Another low was the heightened expectations of many locals of me, because I was of Tamil origin. My Tamil should have always been better and I should have been more comfortable in homes without my socks on. I remember finding that both irritating and discouraging at the time.
Technologically - The high was always my afternoons at IWay, a local chain of internet cafes. There was only one other person on The Madurai program with me and we were connected at the hip. We would always go to IWay together after our Tamil classes at AIIS. We would spend at least two hours there, as it was the only internet we used. We would also call home from the IWay phone booth for about 2 rupees a minute. The low was not being able to connect with friends and family whenever I wanted. Living in an apartment in Madurai could be lonely. Having a better connection to the outside world could have possibly helped.

Professionally - 13 years after travelling to Madurai for CYI year abroad, I am currently living in Madurai again. The program directed the course of my life in profound ways. The CYI year led the way for me to come here as a Fulbrighter 2 years later. I eventually did my Ph.D. research here and also worked at People's Watch in Madurai for a year on the Clinton Fellowship through the American India Foundation. After earning my Ph.D. in Anthropology in May 2015, I moved back to Madurai as the Resident Director of the South India Term Abroad program. This city is in my blood. (2003-04 participant)

Varanasi participants

Personally: I didn't enjoy stifling hot nights, freezing cold showers, occasional diarrhea, a mild bout of malaria, and the near-constant pleas for bakshish. However, I loved everything else: the food, the smells, the music, my 3-speed English bikes and the local bicycle rickshaws, the streets, gullies, and ghats of Banaras, my various third-class train travels, and our group's monthly splurges on five-course English dinners at Clarks Hotel. I didn't gain any lasting friendships with Indian folks; the cultural differences and my own interpersonal limitations were just too strong. However, not surprisingly, I bonded with many of my co-Program participants.
particularly a Midwestern girl with whom I would never have become involved in the US, but
with whom I fell in love 15,000 miles away from home. We traveled together (Ajanta, Ellora,
Kashmir, Khajuraho, Mandu), surreptitiously lived together, and, ultimately, came home together
and got married. (An unexpected pregnancy had something to do with the latter, but it all worked
out for the best and we enjoyed 37 years of marriage until Bette's death in May, 2002.)

Technologically: Booking trunk calls to the States was a challenge, as was the effort to write
coherent aerograms and occasional brief telegrams. However, truth be told, I was not particularly
close to my family, and the lack of communication didn't bother me much. Of course, writing
papers by hand and having them typed by Indian stenographers was not very efficient by today's
standards, but it got the job done.

Historically: I don't remember much about the Indian political situation at the time. Lal Bahadur
Shastri was the PM, but I can't remember anything he did or said. I was somewhat insulated from
current events in Banaras. The Times of India was written in a pedantic and boring style, and my
Hindi wasn't good enough to keep up with Hindi newspapers or magazines. There was no TV,
and I don't remember listening to the radio. I'm sure I read international versions of some
publications like Time Magazine, but I think I essentially had to catch up on a year's worth of
world affairs when I returned to the States.

Academically: I continued with my non-Western major when I returned to New Haven, and
Bette and I took another semester off to teach in a Peace Corps training program in the fall of
1966 (having been recruited by Program colleague Connie Kapera). In 1968, I drew on my
experience in India, as well on my Quaker background, as an element of my commitment to
nonviolence and my service as a conscientious objector. However, my interests changed over
time, and I did not keep up with Hindi language or Indian culture and religion. I have only returned once. In the spring of 2005, I made a pilgrimage to Banaras, Delhi, Agra, Mumbai, and other memorable places with my son Matthew (visiting from post-Tsunami service in Sri Lanka) and my soon-to-be second wife Chris. We retraced steps that Bette and I had taken 40 years earlier, as well as some that Chris's dad had taken 60 years earlier when he was helping to run military operations in the Port of Bombay. The trip was very interesting but challenging and bittersweet. I doubt that I'll ever get back to North India, although I'm intrigued by the South, where I've never been. (1964-65 participant)

The high point of my year was the travel to southern India and Shri Lanka. I am making plans to return to India with my wife to do a similar tour. (1965-66 participant)

We were all challenged by the experience. This was good. Most important, the CYIP year helped open my eyes to the realities of the world in the midst of the cold/propaganda war, the Viet Nam crisis and social inequalities. Many good memories, many sorrowful memories. I am thankful for the opportunity to participate in the program. When I left India it was no longer "dirty" and "primitive". It was much more. (1968-69 participant)

For me, the whole year was extraordinary—the chance to live in a very different culture (and India then was far more different than it is now), and to do so having had a good orientation, so that there was some sense of fitting in as much and as appropriately as possible. In 1970-71, a year in India basically meant a year with very little connection with home and family—no phones, mail exceedingly slow and unreliable, and banking pretty much not happening, so it was an opportunity for growing up quickly that I don’t think contemporary
students get. When I was teaching summer school courses for the University of Michigan in Tibet in the early 2000’s, I marveled at how the students never really cut the strings from their parents—with phone and internet, they were never out of touch.

The actual courses at BHU were weak (teacher walks in, reads a lecture, walks out again) plus it was a year of constant student strikes, so it would have been very challenging academically if I had not had my studies organized independently with the teacher at the Sanskrit University.

The chance to travel during the vacation period was another highlight of the year. I don’t remember the mechanics of it, but we were given good advice and assistance on how to organize travel, 3rd class trains and the like, and so every vacation period was a chance for a great and mind-expanding adventure. I used my breaks to explore more thoroughly various corners of the Tibetan world, and was able to see quite a lot of it.

Because we were fairly isolated from home and family, I found the organization of the program in Banaras with a group house and shared meals very helpful. The group was our main social contact and how the house was managed worked very well. I was lucky with my health and had no major issues. I remember once thinking I needed to see a doctor and was sent over to the hospital. I walked in, took a look around and decided I was definitely not sick enough to be there, and that pretty much cured me. It was quite challenging being a female foreigner at the time, both because of cultural expectations and because there had recently been released a movie about hippies kidnapping a child, and all foreigners were being judged by that film. I was riding my bike across Banaras every day, from BHU to the Sanskrit University, and the harassment along the way was extensive and sometimes scary, although it never actually got out of hand. The most significant challenge I remember was that we were handed $450 at the end of the year
and told to get ourselves home. I had no extra funds on offer from my family, and just barely managed to squeeze a Delhi/Chicago ticket out of that amount of money—that particular decision seemed a bit harsh to me. However, we had a very generous monthly stipend (I think close to a professor’s pay, if what I was told was true) so on a day to day basis we had plenty of money, and we could while away more time than we really should have in the sari shop picking out new ones. (1970-71 participant)

The year was a turning point of my career and personal life. I returned to Banaras the next year and subsequently received a Fulbright grant followed by a JDR 3rd grant. I ended up spending almost ten years in Banaras, receiving a Ph.D. in musicology from BHU. I later devoted my career to studying, teaching, and writing about North Indian music.

High points of the year included, as I mentioned above, the exhilarating experience of communicating with people in Banaras. Trips to Kashmir and Kathmandu with other students were high points of the year. As to low points, I believe I had occasional stomach problems, but I did not get seriously ill. A student colleague had a mental crisis, which I remember quite clearly. I expect he might report on his year and subsequent life with fascinating details.

In those days, one had to send a telegram home or make a trip to the main post office across town to book a phone call to the U.S. Letters were the main forms of communication. There were no phones in the homes, no refrigerators, and no gas stoves, believe it or not. It seemed a bit like camping, but for me at that time that was a thrill, not a problem.

As I said, the year in India set me on my career. After I finally returned to the U.S. with a Ph.D. in 1982, ten years after the Wisconsin year, I had lost contacts at the UW Madison and other academic institutions. Since I did not immediately find a teaching position I accepted a
grant for the Ph.D. program at the University of Pennsylvania (I lived in Philadelphia). I completed my doctorate in Sanskrit in 1992. I was already teaching at Penn as a lecturer in Indian music by that time. I continued at Penn for the rest of my career as Senior Lecturer teaching courses on Indian music and dance. I did occasional language teaching as well, and was visiting professor at UCLA and NYU. Both my doctorates were published and I have continued research and produced a number of articles. My performance career was fairly active. I became a disciple of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and gave concert performances all over the U.S. and in India especially through the 1990s. I still teach the sitar class at Penn, give public performances, and write research articles. (1971-72 participant)

Many people can look back at their educational experience and identify a teacher or two who really made a difference in their lives. For me, this person was Joe Elder. He did what all great educators do. He recognized potential and was determined to unearth it. In my particular case, many teachers had attempted this thankless task and a few had succeeded (to a degree) but Joe, as he has done for countless students over the years, prevailed in a way which forever changed the trajectory of my life.

He listened patiently to my ill-conceived plans for an arcane fieldwork paper on Vedantic philosophy and he looked at me in a very direct manner – sort of like a great prosecuting attorney who asks a question so simply and honestly that the thought of perjury never enters your mind. “Is this what you really want to do?” I sighed. There was no place to hide and I knew this guy was so wicked smart only the truth was going to satisfy him. “No, of course not.” Another sigh. “What I really want to do is make a film.” With affectionate mock outrage he said, “Then get the
hell out of my office and come back here in two weeks with a plan of how you are going to get
this done.”

Looking back on this experience, after a successful career making award winning films
for a hugely diverse set of clients, I wonder what would have happened without his tough-loving
guidance? He gave me courage when I needed it the most. His belief in me far exceeded my
belief in myself and his massive intellect (for which I had the utmost respect) gave me the
confidence to pursue my dreams. If this incredibly smart guy thought I could actually pull this
off, maybe I actually could? Seems to me the positive core of The College Year in India Program
is pretty close to this noble effort. It seems logical since the program wouldn’t really exist with
the courage, spirit and example of such a great educator.

Part of the reason why the program was so incredibly helpful to me is because it
combined the skills and sensibilities (honed over a lifetime) of truly great educators with the
intensity and richness of India herself. Let me explain.

Joe Elder, Joan Raducha, John Grace, Upadhyaya, and so many more wonderful people
were all about the personification of the inspiring virtues and values of higher education. Great
teachers all. Caring, selfless, dedicated-beyond-belief and driven to bring out the best in their
students. Combine their commitment with the intensity of the sub-continent and you have a
blueprint for life-changing experiences.

I come back to one word when I think about India – intensity. For me, it was visual but
that goes with the territory when you want to be a filmmaker. India devastatingly imploded every
visual neuron in my brain. All the visual acuity I thought I had was overloaded from the moment
I stepped off the plane. Heading to Banaras on the train I stared like a zombie out the window,
practically in tears at the splendor I saw whipping past. Electric colors I had never seen before in
such eclectic combinations that it was almost painful for me to process. I couldn’t process it. All I could do was try to absorb. All discrimination or attempts at appreciation were so far beyond words all I could do was watch. Multiply the sensory overload happening to me on a visual level with every other one of the senses and the intensity of India starts to come into focus.

It doesn’t stop with the senses. The intellectual, spiritual, emotional intensity are each their own bottomless pool of impossibly dense life-altering experience. For those of us who have loved India we all know what we mean. For others, it may be a vague amusing notion they read about or saw in a movie and they just shake their heads and say, “I never really understood the fascination.”

For my college year in India, little by little, with great patience and love and guidance and prodding, the great teachers on the program helped me to find my way. No one ever seemed to say no. The answer always seemed to be yes. There was a ferocious positivity about their work. I think most great education at most great institutions often comes down to such interactions with caring teachers. What made CYIP so meaningful for me was this precious generosity of educational spirit and attention combined with the complete disorientation and intensity of India. (1973-74 participant)

My year in Varanasi as a CYIP student was so long ago that by now I only remember the high points—which is basically all of my memories except perhaps of those of the occasional bout of Delhi belly. I returned to the CYIP as a monitor for three years in the late 70s, and in the early 90s I worked on the Antioch Buddhist Studies Program in Bodh Gaya. Incidentally, while I was with Antioch we maintained close relations with the Wisconsin Program—Wisconsin
students often visiting us in Bodh Gaya, and Antioch students visiting the Wisconsin Program in Varanasi. I felt it was a very fruitful exchange. (1973-74 participant)

Communication with home was practically impossible. An aerogram took a month to get to the US, and then another month to get an answer back. Every single package sent to me (with the exception of one where my brother carved out the middle of an old book and sent stuff in the hidden chamber) was stolen. If we wanted to make a phone call, we had to take an overnight train to New Delhi and still struggled with terrible connections. No internet, no computers, I typed my fieldwork project on a small manual typewriter with two sheets of carbon paper. There was actually something quite wonderful about this distance and isolation—something that may no longer be possible for international travelers today—we were far, far away, so were content to be fully where we were.

The sexual harassment of Indian and foreign women is an unpleasant topic that must be mentioned. For me, it was an ongoing experience, and it was awful. Stares, vulgar noises, catcalls, harassment, inappropriate solicitations, grabbing of body parts, etc., punctuated my time in Northern India. It is something that I cannot forget and was the ugliest and most difficult aspect of my experience. I was very gratified when I returned to India years later as a grey-haired, middle-aged woman, and found myself of an entirely different status. It was a great relief to be of no prurient interest; I could look men in the eye, engage them, joke with them, treat and be treated like a human being. (1973-74 participant)

Personally – I didn’t have more than the usual health issues: colds, giardia etc. I did return to the US after a summer of trekking in the Karakorams w/bro Hugh, to leave a huge gastro worm in the outhouse of my sister’s in Tennessee. Being a foreigner in 73-74 was generally a plus as our government had not yet blundered into even more dicey waters internationally led by certain
presidents who followed. Working with kids and schools were welcoming scenarios. Other
interactions with Varanasi citizenry were similarly friendly and usually courteous. Most
unfortunately, the women on the program have an entirely different story to tell regarding
interactions w/ Indian men.

Travel was an adventure. Several of us went by train to the Kumbha Mela in Rishikesh
that year and one had to adopt a very here-and-now take it as it comes attitude to enjoy that
experience. Kinda how you had to take India as a rule. Flying to Nepal during Durga puja was a
bit frustrating for a slew of us as our initial flight was cancelled, but we got to stay at the airport
hotel till the next day which was lucky for me sporting a fever. Rickshaw wallas got the best of
us in the beginning, but we learned. Actually, we usually rode or bikes. Those were blessings and
so easily fixed w/mistries never far off.

Technologically – No email, no cell phones, life was very different in 73-74. The two week
turnaround for letters to and from family and friends was a total frustration at first for most of
us. Living with my family in Tanzania since 66, I was used to this. Sending cables was the fastest
way to communicate home – even though the bureaucratic hoops were formidable – and a phone
call meant an overnight train to Delhi. Don’t have a clear memory of banking at the time. It was
all American Express Traveler’s checks then.

Historically – As mentioned earlier, my initial program in 72-73 was cancelled when India
refused entry to students and university scholars when US government supported West Pakistan
in trying to deny Bangladesh independence. Other than OPEC oil crisis and US still fighting in
Vietnam, history was a blur. (1973-74 Varanasi participant)
High points - learning Hindi with Virendra-ji, living along the Ganga, being accepted in India because of my fluency in language, having the opportunity to experience a completely different version of India than what I had seen as a missionary child, developing lifelong friendships. The program solidified my relationship with India that continues today. After the program I knew that I would do some kind of work that involved working abroad. After deciding not to pursue a PhD (mostly because I really wanted to pursue a degree in language pedagogy not in linguistics and did not find a program that seemed to fit) I went on to get an MPH. My public health degree is in international health and I fully intended to work in international development.

Low points - realizing that as a foreign woman I also had to be very careful, even among Indian males who I considered friends. There were requests of my western male friends about whether the Indian male friend could "have" me. And recognizing that I would always be an outsider no matter what. That was a very strong and important learning, though there were times I did not want it to be so.

It was also difficult to be so out of touch with family. Phone calls were extremely difficult, letters took a long time. I missed a couple of important family events - and when I felt I needed to communicate with family, often letters crossed in the mail. That was hard.

Being there as monitor when Mrs. Gandhi was shot was definitely the most difficult time. We were frightened for our students and for ourselves. Curfew was established so going to check on students, and to let Joe know the situation was difficult and one student had not yet returned from October break. We only knew that he would be traveling back through Delhi. Turns out our fears were well founded he was in Delhi and through it would be interesting to watch the
rioting. Very lucky he was not harmed! Another very challenging time was a student who was a Christian Scientist and did not want to take any medication even when very ill. It was very difficult to know how to support him, and whether we needed to send him home. (1976-77 participant)

Living in Sarnath, and being close to Varanasi, were a total high point. I still think Varanasi is one of the most amazing places on the planet. People who have lived there come away deeply impacted. It is hard to say exactly how, but the cycle of life and of generations is so alive and dynamic. I would still go there on a moment's notice given the chance. (1980-81 participant)

The highlight was definitely having one-on-one personal instruction in both Literary and colloquial Tibetan from Geshe Namgyal Wangchen, a Tibetan monk, scholar and teacher, highly respected in the Tibetan Buddhist community. From my studying with him, I was well able to study in Tibetan at Sera Je Monastery the next year, sitting in class as a layperson with Tibetan monks. That was one of my goals.

My other goal at which I was not so successful was to become fluent enough in Tibetan to be an oral translator. After returning to the U.S., I did attempt this, but was not skilled enough to make a good go of it, especially when someone more fluent than I arrived to replace me. This was due primarily to the limitations of my own mental acuity. However, I have used the Tibetan language I did learn ever since, reading texts in Tibetan and receiving teachings in Tibetan from many wonderful Buddhist teachers, and doing some translation for individuals meeting with teachers. I have returned to India to study with Tibetan teachers 5 times since retiring over 10 years ago. The language I learned on the program always is so helpful when visiting the Tibetan
exile community in India, and also has been helpful communicating with the local Madison Tibetan community.

My year on the program was during the pre-digital age, at least for India. Typewriters were the norm. Postal mail was how you communicated with friends and family at home. I might have called home a couple of times - it was complicated and expensive.

As for my health, in those days, not so much now, you expected some kind of intestinal “discomfort” on a fairly regular basis. Some of that is due to us young people taking chances and drinking water or eating where we shouldn’t have. The state of one’s digestive system was a very common topic of conversation among the students and other non-Indians we met. (1979-80 participant)

The year in Varanasi was really important for me. Getting to India was like coming home in that South Asia felt so familiar. The difference for me was living as a college student on the program rather than as a child in a foreign service family. To know that I could live the way we lived in Varanasi was really affirming for me. During my career, which has taken me to numerous developing countries for work, I have remembered Joe Elder’s words when he visited us in Varanasi living in the servants’ quarters of the Maharajah’s palace – “Enjoy living like this now – as you get older you will want more comfort than this.” I think of Joe’s words when I check into hotels around the world as I travel for work. I was in the program when there was no internet so we were there on our own. We wrote letters home and waited for responses. We didn’t know any differently so it seemed ok.

We were not able to take classes at BHU that year because the students were on strike – I can’t remember the reason for the strike, but that made me cognizant of the power of civil society. We always felt well taken care of on the program – from John and Cyn Cort who were
the leaders of the program the year I was there and Ram Prasad, the cook who fed and took care of us.

Academically and for my career, as I have said, the year in Varanasi was pivotal for me. It was the year that I shifted from being the kid of a foreign service family to knowing that I could have a career in international development on my own terms. I found studying Hindi and studying family planning fulfilling and have continued in a career focusing on research and policy related to family planning and reproductive health. I got a PhD in the Development Sociology/International Population Program at Cornell University and have worked in a range of organizations. I have also branched out to gender, HIV/AIDS and climate change. (1979-80 participant)

I would say the only low point might have been having to get gamaglobulin boosters from a friend at the nearby pharmacy rather than a clinic, as we learned some of the clinics were not breaking needles (so risking them being reused). As I recall, we WERE informed and able to bring extra needles and syringes for boosters, and informed to make certain the needles were broken after being used on us. A disadvantage at the time of being a white foreigner may have been having to wait in long lines at things like the local Sonarpura post office, as the postal employees seemed determined to let everyone know they were in charge, and that included making foreigners understand they had no special privileges and, in fact, were not that welcome. Also, at the time, foreigners had to all register with the Foreigner's Registration Office, which included the FRO officer attempting to solicit a bribe; at a time when the Indian government was supposedly cracking down on such corruption, it seemed prudent to not attempt to offer a bribe, as the FRO officer could then charge one with attempted bribery or accept such a bribe. So when I saw him eyeing my ballpoint pen (not many were available in Varanasi at the time), as I
preferred (and still do) fountain pens, which at the time were still prevalent in Varanasi, I gave it
to him after using it to sign the necessary papers. Dealing with the same office for permission for
trips to, for example, Darjeeling, was also difficult. I was attempting to take my bride there
around Christmas, and, despite applying for a permit months in advance, never received one by
the time we had to travel. So we traveled to a checkpoint at Siliguri, unsure if we were going to
be permitted to travel on, and received a 15-day permit (though I'd applied for only 8).

Personally, the American holidays were hard, mostly for my wife. But fellow students rallied
with the cook and monitors to make it much more enjoyable. One friend, Andrew Ferguson, who
I'll never forget, returned from the main market on Dasashwamehd with a hand-made chess
board I'd admired weeks before with him, as a gift which is why I'll never forget him or his
kindness. And I wound up divorcing Marijo in 1984 in Texas, as moving around with me proved
to be too much for her.

Travel: we did not have a lot of money, as I'd only managed to save the amount recommended
for the trip (as well as paying tuition) and my wife had sold her car and quit her job to come with
me. So the only real travel problems we encountered were of our own making: we could not
afford to travel any way except second class, anywhere, and I don't believe at the time India had
even thought of reserving a quota of cars or seats for tourists (as I learned they had years later,
when I returned in 1988). The trains were the old steam trains of my youth, so that was not a
problem; and we'd been informed by I think our monitors when we arrived in New Delhi we'd
need bistis, bedrolls, for sleeping on the train, and water, so we were prepared for all. India's
water being polluted and bacteria filled was a health risk, though not really a problem. The
Bhavan had a water-filter (carbon) container for drinking from, so the only illnesses I recall were
mostly water-or-food-borne; I got the flu once, maybe a cold. And food poisoning (my own
fault) probably from eating at a local restaurant. But we all about once a month also took a packet available at the pharmacy to rid our bodies of potential worms. All except I recall one student.

**Technology:** Cellphones didn't exist; electricity was spotty at best, and computers, even for correspondents, were heavily taxed as India wanted foreigners to use its technology, not imported technology. So, visits to the post office, like many Benarsis, was a great educational experience; I recall waiting three hours or more, regularly, for a trunk-line phone call to connect me to New Delhi from the Hotel Jaishree for some work I was doing.

**Banking:** It was only inconvenient in that we had to frequently (once a month?) go to a local bank to exchange money. As I recall, the rate was something like $1=Rs. 47. India was very happy to receive dollars in exchange for rupees. It did not allow officially exchanging money back; so we were handed monthly stipends in PL-480 rupees (an arrangement with the Indian government and the U.S. government).

**Historically:** I was, in the course of conducting interviews for my project, asked to cover a sensational trial in Benares for The Associated Press--the first murder trial of Charles Sobhraj, "Serpentine," at last word currently serving a life sentence for a murder in Kathmandu, and a reputed (and essentially confessed) serial killer. My Hindi tutorial consisted, thanks to Hindi teacher Virendra Singh, of largely translating Indian Hindi newspaper articles (about the trial) into English. I learned a lot about Indian journalism, or Indian newspaper language, from it. Also, in conducting my project, I learned a lot about Indian historic events--the Sikh Separatist movement of the Dhal Khalsa, and local as well as international politics.

** Academically:** Ha. I had thought, when I left Madison for the College Year in India--my senior year--I had completed all the requirements for the School of Journalism and Mass
Communications bachelor's degree, and I had, in fact. But as the School at the time (don't know about now) was technically under the College of Letters & Science, I was not made aware by any professor that the graduation requirements for L&S had, in fact, changed when I was abroad. I went through commencement without a word in May 1982. While awaiting my diploma, which I was told would be mailed, in Texas where I landed my first journalism job after I thought graduating, I received word from the UW that my transcript—which had more than enough credits for graduating—indicated I was 6 credits short of my degree, as those 6 credits (in, I believe, sciences) had been the new requirement. Which is why/how I wound up officially graduating in 1984.

Next steps: After returning to India in February-March of 1988 as a reporter writing essentially feature stories for The Fort Worth Star-Telegram and its Tarrant Business section, I decided I was tired and frustrated covering local U.S. news (particularly crime) in Texas, where I'd started my journalism career upon returning from the College Year-in-India. It wasn't long before my dissatisfaction resulted in my quitting the Star-Telegram, and looking for other work. I briefly worked for the Fort Worth Business Press, while some of my India stories were still running in Tarrant Business, in an attempt to prove myself as a business reporter to prevent what had already happened, my being typecast as a police and crime reporter. Everywhere I applied for a job other than as a police reporter seemed not interested; I could have had jobs from Detroit to Atlanta and Houston as a police reporter. But I'd reminded myself on the trip back to India I liked travel and living in foreign countries, and I had a relatively unique background as an American with experience living and even reporting from and in India. Upon leaving Texas for Wisconsin for both financial and career reasons, eventually I was hired by The Associated Press for the one bureau where they had an opening that I was qualified for—as a Newsman in
Bismarck, North Dakota. I took the job thrilled at getting officially on with The World's Largest Newsgathering Organization. I wound up thoroughly disillusioned and aware the career path I'd hoped for--a couple years in Bismarck, then to the New York World Desk, then overseas as a correspondent--seemed more unlikely than when I had covered the trial in India. So I left for a job on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina--covering, ostensibly, county government and winding up, not too surprisingly, covering police and crime. I thought I'd basically retired to a resort island's small newspaper, when I discovered the name of a friend, former neighbor, and former UW-Journalism student I knew as a byline on a story about gold in The Wall Street Journal. Before long, I (thanks to Alwyn Scott) was hired by an international joint venture between The Associated Press and Dow Jones, called AP-Dow Jones News Services. At the time, a requirement was to expect to be posted overseas to cover particularly macroeconomics and foreign exchange. When asked where I wanted to go, I naturally said "India." Only to be informed the service did not, at that time, have an India bureau. So I wound up learning Spanish (I'd learned Hindi/Urdu, and completed the Benares Hindu University diploma course, which was required for our College Year in India but I don't think anyone enjoyed), though we did enjoy the bicycles we were provided to ride to the BHU campus in the mornings, so I'd convinced my new boss I didn't think learning Spanish could be that difficult), and was made Chief Correspondent of Spain for AP-Dow Jones News Services, based in Madrid. And soon learned that the "gitanos" (Gypsies) languages include Hindi. Just as I discovered Flamenco singing is related to the Ghazal, and dancing is very similar to Kathakali.

I was recalled to the U.S. after a supervisor grew concerned any correspondent with more than three years in a country would lose their "edge," (an argument refuted by many in my CYIP project), and wound up editing and coaching correspondents around the world from New York.
Including Tim Mapes, who was named AP-Dow Jones' first India correspondent. Long story short (believe it or not, because now I'm condensing the last 25 years) I was offered an opportunity to be posted to India, in New Delhi, as a News Editor for Dow Jones/The Wall Street Journal, about two years ago, but had to turn it down for family considerations (I now have a 14-year-old son about to start high school). However, my family has expressed an interest in visiting India someday--not living there--and, currently, as an Interactive News Writer for Dow Jones/The Wall Street Journal, I get to edit and correspond with our India bureau, in Hindi and Bopjauri, regularly...:-). And my College-Year-in-India as well as return in 1988 gave me plenty of grist for my first three novels, a trilogy set largely in India, and all but the last set mostly in Varanasi. (1981-82 participant)

I was there in 1982-83, so computers were not yet available, which meant I had to type my entire thesis on a rickety old manual typewriter that I brought with me, which meant using lots of whiteout. Personally, I met my former wife in Madison during the summer program, but unfortunately that ended even before finishing graduate school; however, since she was Bengali, I decided to switch over from Hindi-Urdu to Bengali, which ultimately led to me doing fieldwork in West Bengal for my doctorate. I did, however continue to study Hindi and Urdu even after I started studying Bengali in graduate school. I am then also went on to study a number of other Indian languages (e.g., Assamese. Oriya, Tamil, Tibetan). I continue to have a strong interest in Indian languages and wish to pursue Khasi during my next sabbatical. Having already spent two solid years in India prior to my junior year abroad, I had already suffered most of the ailments one can imagine the first time around. I was therefore in general good health during my junior year abroad. (1982-83 participant)
I chose to live independently, to experience what life could be like for a modern young college woman on her own, in contrast with that ancient city. I found a room, facing the Ganga, with a small kitchen, running water, and outdoor shared bath and toilet facilities, in Pandey Ghat, an area that was near Bengali Tola, Dashashwamedh, and Khedarnath Ghats, under the auspices of a large landlord family. The rent, Rs. 150 per month, was within my stipend, and with frugal management, would allow me to save some money for other useful purposes. From this date in time, I don't remember much about the banking issues, if any. The area was the 'personal kingdom' so to speak, of a few very wealthy and socially privileged Hindu families. I soon began settling-in: learning the ropes to live there, to take care of my ultra small flat, to deal with daily shopping, cooking, washing, to boil and store adequate drinking water, learning about my environs and the lives and perspectives of the people around me. All of this, as a single unmarried woman, opened my eyes to many things. I began to realize the uniqueness of my situation, the insights it afforded me, and perhaps the obligation to try to express my subjective understanding of it. The early mullings on the year project topic.

Classes with Sri Virendra Singh, undoubtedly the world's most masterful Hindi teacher, (ever) at the program site and at his home, were required challenges that had to be met; getting to and from being amongst the greatest of them. Thanks to Virendraji, my Hindi quickly became proficient enough to communicate on a wide variety of topics. Still, there were times and issues, particularly one sticky point on the rent, when it seemed that electricity charges were being added, when the program facilitator, Ramu, was invaluable in bringing about the necessary understanding. During my year, the classes at Benares Hindu University were mostly off: student political activity was strong, there were lots of strikes. Campus was frequently closed, which I
think suited us all just fine, although the BHU campus was lovely with large shady trees and plantings.

Traveling and walking about alone, being a young female, foreign, yet possibly Indian, struggling to meet acceptable criterions in dress (but I could never allow my saree to sweep the ground, it was just too dirty! So it was always slightly above my ankles, a glaring fauxpas) were social markers for all kinds of unwanted attentions. Sometimes it was harrowing. Sometime even going grocery shopping became a miserable experience. There were days when I felt absolutely intimidated, and others when my anger at the faceless level of torment would impotently seethe.

There was no changing the mindsets around me. That part was hard. I dreaded to have to go out after dark. I detested the dirt, smoke, exhaust, heat, and indecent grabbing, being bumped on all sides of any crowd experience, day or night. I was aware that my status as a foreigner gave me certain freedoms in what I came to see was the feudal kingdom I was in. I could argue and disagree with the men, and not care what they thought. The attention from the men was also a problem in getting closer to the women. There were 'cincher' moments and arguments that demonstrated to the women that I was their staunch advocate on many issues, and that made intimate relations with them easier. But they would never walk about alone, or argue, or boldly get involved in issues as I did, nor wear their saree hiked up like me, and these were dividing lines.

The small physical area of the community was filled with semi-compounds built one on top or side of each other. The buildings ranged from small shack rooms, to double and triple story, divided up in various ways. All were cram packed with people of all different economic and educational levels. There was a field within it for the landlord’s buffalos and cows. There
were single mother families, second marriage families; widows, a old Hindu priest and wife, who added considerable colour to the mix; young single Indian male students, four or 5 foreigners self-included; another rich family with several sons, their wives, and a recently widowed daughter-in-law; young educated poor couples from other parts of India, servant families, and more. We were all thrown together. Contrasts were stark and pronounced, and humaneness caused melding points.

On the other hand, being a foreigner meant I was rich to the wretched poor of this particular kingdom. And there were ways that people tried to take advantage of that, which I had to harden myself too. For example, three months before I came into the community, the mother of eight young children had died of a self-inflicted abortion at eight months term. The children were orphaned, miserable, their father was a drunk. Their hunger was real, for a mother's attentions and caring, for milk, food, and clothes. The smallest children of the family, three boys, ages 7, 4 and almost 2 years of age, caught my eye with their desperate needs. The oldest child was a 13 year old daughter who now had all the overwhelming responsibilities of her siblings. I became involved, trying to get some basics to them, as it seemed they were not getting enough. To my chagrin, I soon saw the drunk father selling the small clothes I had bought for his naked children. He provided nothing for them, except his name. To my knowledge he never brought them food. I expected the landlord to provide for them, for he frequently had them fetching things from the close by bazaar, or picking up around his house, or massaging his head. Too often the children told me they were hungry. Whenever I cooked, I brought the small ones into my room to eat. My heart felt sore on their account. I could not help but pick up nutritious snacks for them on my trips 'home'. These types of morally impossible situations abounded. The Lords of the Kingdom were casual about the suffering of those within it. Poverty can make people
pawns, the education I received in these real ways, facing human nature meshing with status, power, wealth, inhumanity, poverty, greed and need, is unavoidable in India, with a population of over 800 million well below poverty lines. It is the eternal paradox of a land steeped in the charge of righteous duty and its blatant disregard.

On the other hand, there was the complex intricacy of being part of a small community, functioning in the way it did, with the economics and power structures that held it all in place. To an extent, the landlord was a protective influence for everyone. My association with the 'big house' as a more 'privileged' person, gave me freedoms and security that were unique. This gave me access into the lives and perspectives of those I was living with, most of whom were poorer and dependent on the sufferance of the landlord's family. (1983-84 participant)

The obvious low points were when I was sick. During my student year, and my two years as monitor, I think I heard every student utter the words “I have never been so sick in all my life”. India has a way of smacking you pretty hard from time to time. Surprisingly, I did not suffer from homesickness at all during my year (or while I was monitor). I stayed in regular touch with my family at home through weekly letters. In fact, I still have a complete record of that time – I saved all of my parents’ letters and my parents saved all of mine. They are a remarkable snapshot of what was the most important and formative year of my life. The fact that we did not have easy access to a phone (I didn’t call home the entire year I was a student) and that the internet was not around at that time, meant that we relied on our fellow students for camaraderie. I am still in touch with a handful of the students from my program, and John Melvin and Claudia Welch remain two of my closest friends.
One of the highlights of the year was the month-long, annual Hindi retreat in the Kullu Valley of Himachal Pradesh. At that time, Manali was still a quaint hill station surrounding by apple orchards and pine forests. I slept outside on the roof of our guest house every night in my North Face sleeping bag transfixed by the stars in the night sky. I have never seen so many “shooting stars” in my life. When we weren’t studying Hindi with Virendara ji, we were encouraged to meet the locals, practice our Hindi, hike to the local water fall or to the Hadimba Devi temple. I met a dear friend at that time, Murli Dhar Dogra, who I am still in touch with today. At the end of the Hindi retreat, we had a week to get back to Varanasi before classes started again. I spent that week living with Murli and his family and harvesting his rice crop. I had my own landscaping business throughout middle school and high school, but nothing compared to the kind of hard work we did that week in Manali. The saving grace was our evening soaks in the natural hot spring tank at the Vashisht Temple. Again, the beauty of a full year program, that allows for quality time in one place like Manali (and of course Varanasi) is that there is time to develop relationships. I fear that this is what is missing from today’s study abroad experiences.

I also had one of the most traumatic experiences of my life in Manali when a group of us went on a day hike to climb a local mountain (around 11,000 ft) and got lost on the way home and had to spend the night on the side of the mountain, huddled together to stay warm. Luckily no one was hurt. While this was frightening at the time, I learned a number of lessons. First and foremost was the importance of leadership. Our monitors, who were with us, handled a very challenging situation with poise and strength. We never doubted their decisions along the way because of their confidence and care.
I think the most interesting time for me in terms of historic events took place in 1992-93 when I was monitor and the Babri Masjid was demolished. This led to unrest around India, and there was a significant military presence in Varanasi and a strict curfew because Varanasi also has a disputed mosque. For at least a week, or two, we shifted all of the students to the program house. We were able to move the cooks there as well before the curfew. I was able to convince the Bhelupur police to provide me a curfew pass so I could bike to Lanka each day to buy vegetables at the market. It was quite strange (and special) biking the streets of Varanasi with no other vehicles or pedestrians around. (1988-89 participant)

Any book about the college experience of American students needs to consider money, and figuring out how to fund my year in India was as complicated as any other part of the process. I am sad to recall the misinformation given me by the Financial Aid office, who encouraged me to first enroll and even complete the Program and then pay the $15,000+ balance with a Sallie Mae loan later (the following summer!) I don't know how I could have been so stupid, but I did just that. Educational loans are not only more expensive after you've completed the courses, but Sallie Mae also required them to have a cosigner. This casual decision was a serious mistake. It wasn't the only financial mistake I made at that time, but it was a big one. My impressions of that year, then, are enhanced by the awareness that I am still paying for it today.

In India, internet access required numerous steps, almost all of which were uncomfortable and inconvenient. At one point I had to create a PAL copy of a video and send it to a festival in Europe, which required no small amount of legwork, but was also fun because I could practice speaking with strangers.
Two years after the Gujarat riots, India didn't seem particularly liberal. However, if you could have told me at that time what we know now – that Narendra Modi would become prime minister of India and Donald Trump the President of America, I would have had some choice Banarsi sarcasm to offer in reply.

I also remember being given a video by the filmmaker Rahul Roy in Delhi, but it was a VHS tape. Where did one find a VCR in Varanasi at that time? At the TV-wallah's shop, of course. It could be rented, which suited me just fine, but some malfunction meant it periodically had to be opened so the surface of its moving heads could be cleaned with a playing card. A young boy was dispatched to perform this function and then, after drinking two cups of tea, return the VCR to its owner.

I received numerous electrical shocks trying the operate various cameras, computers or chargers with an improper electrical current and my hapless neighbor was shocked rather dramatically by the exposed wires in our shared entryway.

Wow, Varanasi just felt really, really far from America at that time, maybe the longest-feeling journey I've ever taken. However, the program house had such a good support network that I never once encountered a real crisis. Another student, also a close friend after all these years, was burglarized twice from his apartment on the second floor of the building we shared and it turned out to be the kid next door. I remember feeling very paranoid after that for a while, but I never had such an experience. I have a permanent injury to my knee, sustained during fieldwork, that allows me to predict rain with a high degree of accuracy. I distinctly recall the time the program monitor's husband was pistol whipped after we tried to play cricket in a seemingly neglected lot across from the program house. I saw multiple dead bodies, including a
train suicide. I hung out on a Bollywood film set. I lost too much weight. I ate a lot of bhang. I collected film posters and sent them to a film scholar in America. (2004-05 participant)

Waltair participants

High points were probably the amazing, extensive travels I undertook both by myself and with friends the length and breadth of India and Sri Lanka. This would include several hugely meaningful weeks I spent in a small ashram outside of Pondicherry at the request of Professor Ramakrishna Rao. I don't think a week goes by without expressly and vividly recalling aspects of that experience. In particular I not infrequently tell my patients about a truly mutative moment that occurred while I was washing a pair of white sweat socks in a basin outside the ashram. Being a pranayama ashram, it's also where I learned to breathe. That's a lesson that I can't even begin to quantify. The group experience in itself was also extraordinary. Academically, it was pretty much a waste of time. I was unfortunate enough, having already started to learn some Sanskrit, to be placed with the chairman of the department. At least I still remember a number of slokas he made me recite at a Rotary club meeting two weeks after we arrived… A little bit of Kalidasa goes along with.

Writing this I do recall what I would have to say was the low point. I was hit by a severe, acute attack of amoebic dysentery in the middle of watching a movie downtown. That wasn't even the worst of it. I couldn't leave the bathroom until the theater had been locked up - so I had to climb over an iron gate in order to get out. (1971-72 participant)

We were on a high of amazement and new insights most of the year. And a personal high. Joe and others had noted that Danielle and I were madly in love. They advised us that India was a conservative place and that to avoid ruffling feathers we present ourselves in Waltair as a married couple. We did so, with a made-up ceremony and certificate. We lived in married
student housing on Sea Sands Road as husband and wife. We ultimately did marry in the U.S.
and were together 42 years until Danielle died of cancer. In a direct and highly flexible way, this
program first sanctified our love! We had all the usual culture shock encounters with Indian
social norms, food, transportation, hygiene. The all-night wedding of the beloved daughter of
our music teacher was one highlight of thousands. At the low end, I went home with raging
amoebic dysentery. Took the bus that went from Delhi to Munich. Was hospitalized in
Kabul. Hitchhiked across Afghanistan. Arrived home to Chicago ultimately and was
immediately hospitalized for a week. Was sick for two years after returning home. And despite
all that, never regretted an instant - except for the instant I swallowed the masala dosa in Chennai
which I believe delivered the dread disease.

The year in India was foundational to the rest of my life and career. We spent ten of the
next fifteen years in Asia. I became a foreign correspondent, covering/translationg this great
region to huge numbers of Americans. Asia [became] a second home. Danielle became dean for
international students at MIT. I became an NPR radio host, drawing often on the insights and
perspective I learned in Madison and that year in India. (1975-76 participant)

The sum of this year was the greatest educational experience of my life, more so than any
college year, any law school year, and comparable to my first year of marriage, or of law
practice, when the rules of life are reestablished and accommodated with success and a
smile. This was a year I would not trade, despite frustration, confusion and distance from the
familiar and those who meant and mean so much to me. I remember endless lines, the rigors of
just getting a train ticket with three trips to the station, learning the ways of auto rickshaw rides,
and overcoming all the unfamiliar in trips with new Indian friends, and a trip with Maury
Gruenewald to Bombay, Bangalore, Mysore and Ooty and back during the first break of the
year. I recall my frustration with Telugu, and the ah-ha moment of realizing that I could actually hold an intelligent conversation in this new language. I smile in delight at my friendship with the British anthropology student from Cambridge studying a small tribe in the Aracu Valley, meeting the tribal members and getting drunk on fermented palm tree nectar. (1976-77 participant)

The low points were illness (some form of dysentery—lasting from the second week of travel until November, when I finally received proper treatment), living in the university hostel (inedible food, filthy toilet facilities), train travel (when we arrived in India we went by train from Delhi (where we landed) to Vizag--I think we were on a mail train, and we went third class…it took three days, and I’m pretty sure this is where the dysentery came from). I was generally unimpressed by the level of advising we received. Our local advisor was only interested in his own work (studying Sanskrit) and had no time for the many issues college students invariably have. Also, the college environment was hardly “friendly”—we were in a masters level university department, and the teachers had little patience for our idiocy; classes were horribly boring, and I skipped too often. I also remember illness in general was a real challenge, along with the dysentery, I think I may have had malaria. My year was during the “emergency” (martial law under Mrs. Gandhi). Other than the fact we had to report to the police monthly (and sit around the station all day until someone acknowledged we existed), the emergency was really not a great challenge to me. In fact, I became one of those people who would rather stupidly say, “the trains ran on time, and the university stayed open”—that is, the things I cared about! But, there were many, many high points. Eventually, I fell in love with the Indian diet, clothes, shopping, the markets, the temple, and all manner of people in India (everyone was so friendly—I was frequently asked to attend meals, weddings, movies, etc., with
new acquaintances, and everyone seemed eager to explain India to me). I eventually moved in with an Indian family (and subsequently married one of their daughters—and, we remain married forty years later). In fact, I so fell in love with India that I sought to return the year following CYIP, but I was turned down for funding. (I did go on to make India the prime subject matter of my professional life.) Communication with home was nearly impossible. A phone call required months of planning. Telegrams could be used. We stayed with air mail letters. But, we did not expect better…those were days of low technology even in the US. Last, but not least, I went on to study India beyond college, attending a PhD program at Northwestern in History and Literature of Religions, specializing in S. Asia. I completed a sizeable fraction of the program at the University of Chicago (working with Wendy Doniger), and then went on to a teaching and research career, at Rutgers, Princeton University, and currently Lafayette College. I even taught Sanskrit for nearly ten years at Princeton. I’ve visited India frequently over the years, but for the most part, since I am focused on texts, this travel has been for tourism rather than for academic study. (1976-77 participant)

The Emergency had just ended. There was a lot of paranoia. Communication with home was impossible; I did not speak with family members for a whole year. Of course there were no computers. I could immerse myself in India in a way today's students can't imagine, and wouldn't want to. (1977-78 participant)

The personal highlights of my year in Vizag were making some very good Indian friends. That year we had only three students studying Telugu on the CYI Program—and one dropped out and left India after the first week. We had no monitor since Wilma Hall had been forced to withdraw due to some health issues. So Pam Yadon and I were forced to fend for ourselves to a great extent. I relied on my neighbor, M.V. Krishnayya quite a bit for many things. My Sanskrit
teacher also provided much practical assistance, including teaching me how to cook vegetarian food. (Some of those meals were highlights, but others would qualify as lowlights!) I was also able to meet many other foreign students, including a number of African and Middle Eastern students, during my first year at Andhra University. Maintaining friendships with students at the other campuses was also rewarding. I was able to visit UW students in Madurai in mid-year and then made a trip to Varanasi as I was leaving India in May of 1982.

Technology was not a big part of our lives back then. (No television in Vizag until August of 1984.) Of course, I did have a portable (mechanical) typewriter with me. I used that to type "aerogrammes" back home each week. My mom used to write many letters, and we had mail delivered twice a day, six days per week—though it came just once on Saturdays. I made just two phones calls home during those eight months. Booking a call in advance was required, and then you would be told to return during a one-hour window during which your call would be put through. After living in Satya Prasad Compound for some months, one of our neighbors (who had a phone) allowed me to send his number to my folks so that I could get a call from home. So I waited for a call at Easter and after waiting five or six hours the call did actually come through. As I remember, the calls were great while they lasted but afterwards you felt a bit homesick.

Looking back at historical events of that year I realize that I was very much out of touch with U.S. politics. But by reading "The Hindu" I got quite an education in Indian politics, and in world affairs more generally. My Indian neighbors were often quite willing to talk about politics in the state and also at the national level. Indira Gandhi was much admired but also vilified for her style of governing on certain issues. I also came to be aware that newspapers had definite reputations bases upon their political leanings. Most people read the news in Telugu; monthly news periodicals were also popular. The hottest topics were about government policies on
"reservations" for untouchables and backward castes. I also learned a lot about cricket by reading the sports pages regularly. I became a fan of Kapil Dev and a couple other players on the Indian national team.

My greatest development academically was learning how to structure and carry out the independent fieldwork project. Gaining language skills was also crucial to my future career in academics. After completing my first year on the program I returned to Vizag for two more years, serving as the program monitor from 1982-1984. This stretch of time helped me to gain enough mastery of Sanskrit that I could enter a PhD program in Oriental Studies at the University of Pennsylvania in the fall of 1984. (1981-82 participant)

I recall by December I was missing American “things”. Food, culture, etc. There were only about six of us in Andhra and we were getting on each other’s nerves for sure. I went down to a movie house in Vizag and saw Sidney Poitier in “To Sir with Love.” It gave me a second wind. Years later, I met Mr. Poitier. I did get very sick in the second half of the trip. As I recall, about 2 or 3 weeks of being completely wiped out. One thing I noticed, particularly in retrospect, was how happy I was during my Indian stay. I believe being completely out of contact with my family was a large contributor to this experience. No one could bother me and I was relieved of caring for needy parents, etc. In a manner, I felt free in a way that I previously had not. (1982-83 participant)

I don't think I had a single low point that entire year; I loved every minute of it. And it continues to be the biggest influence on my life ever since. The high points started with meeting J. Prabhakara Sastry, my Sanskrit teacher. As everyone in the Wisconsin program, even those who never studied with him, knows, learning Sanskrit from J. P. Sastry is a unique experience, treasured by anyone willing to take on the effort asked. In the end, since I went back a couple of
times, I studied three hours a day, six days a week, for over two years with him. He became one of my closest friends. And his children and I still stay in touch. That was one of the many intimate relationships I developed that year, each one special in its own way, all important highs for me. Other high points included in-India travel, gaining an appreciation for the amazing cuisine of Andhra (the best in India), and deepening my appreciation for the incredible cultures and history of South Asia. That year also confirmed my decision to pursue a Ph.D. in Indian History. Most important of the year's highs was meeting a Telugu M.A. student who would later become my wife. Vanajakshi and I just celebrated our 26th wedding anniversary. I began my Ph.D. work in 1989, and received the degree in 1997. I then turned the dissertation into a book, "Colonial Lists / Indian Power: Identity Formation in 19th-Century Telugu-Speaking India." Since then, I moved to software and have been working in high tech these last 17 years. (Ironically, I speak Telugu daily at work with my colleagues here in the San Francisco Bay Area.) My in-laws still live in Andhra, and we travel back every few years for a four-month stay at our house in Nandigama, from where I telecommute during my visit. (1985-86 participant)
Student Survey Question # 6

Looking back on your year in India and your current worldview, what reflections would you like to share?

Delhi participants

My junior year in India was clearly the most meaningful year of my undergraduate work, and my life overall. I've come to see the deep value of a college education that featured experiencing something quite different for myself. I’m struck by the value of integrating emotions, problem solving and ideas in the context of understanding and creating a better world. Subsequently I was talking with the Ford Foundation about the process of a building junior-year kind of experiences for many American students.

At the same time, I need to say how difficult it was for me after the year in India. I travelled for four months in southeast Asia and Japan before returning to the US. The travel was some of the best times of my life. But I returned to a country I hardly could deal with: the Vietnam war, the assassinations, the multiple cultural and political conflicts. My personal journey was also quite challenging in the year after I returned. I was quite unprepared for this challenge as well.

The value of the JYIP for my professional work is multi-dimensional and immense. I taught high school and then completed my Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction in the School of Education at UW—the top-rated department of C&I in the country. In many respects, my whole career and college professor and associate dean was launched in my junior year in India program. And Hindi was my “foreign language” in my Ph.D. program.
On the one hand, I learned the terrible effects of a stifling bureaucracy on good education. The lessons from India were sizeable in this regard. Then while I was in graduate school, I remember a brief conversation with Joe Elder and asked him about bureaucracy in India. He replied that he saw that I might be headed for work in an American university, and worried about what level of bureaucracy I might experience there. Oh, was he right.

I also learned how education can be a powerful pathway to individual and societal development. I saw students making tremendous efforts to succeed in India, I saw that diversity and poverty were not always the barriers that they often were portrayed in American research. From my experience in Indian schools, I was strongly motivated to look to the high school experiences of students in other countries in my research when so many of my colleagues were limited by their focus almost exclusively on American schools.

I returned to India on a Fulbright to work with the Joint Ministry (national government) on improving high schools. My prior experiences in “inner city” high schools during the JYIP was very helpful in many ways. I then returned to India a decade ago to do case studies of impressive schools—including Sardar Patel in New Delhi where I would have been proud to have my daughter, Satya, attend. (1963-64 participant)

My work is global and focused on poverty. The India experience shaped my career. I still work with colleagues in India but the low and middle income world is one in which I have had a rich impactful involvement. Both as a scholar [over 65000 citations and an extra 3000-4000 per year with many honors] and as someone working on policy [involved in the food system area in taxation, marketing controls, many activities where I work with Ministry of Finance and Health], I have made a major impact. The was really a trajectory set in place by my India experience.
My career is probably one of your poster child’s for the impact it made on my abilities, thinking and career. And I did give back via a UW honors program trust fund to fund an economist or social scientist to take an honors program thesis into a third world country that is low or middle income. (1965-66 participant)

…the India program year (along with the university years in Ceylon and Pakistan) were perhaps the most enjoyable years of my life. They were intense. They were filled with interactions with South Asians of all classes from high government ministers and MP’s to mid-grade civil servants, to journalists, and farmers. My thoughts for the future of the program are simple:

- Keep it running. Young Americans need to get out of themselves and into other places.
- To future participants: stretch the boundaries of your years. Don’t hang too much with your American program colleagues. Break some rules, cross some boundaries, and make local friends at every level of life.
- To the program managers: try to wean the kids away from technology. Better not to have high speed internet in their residential quarters. Let them learn to work at the IT level of an ordinary lower middle class Indian 20 year old. Get them in the habit of reading the local (print) press every day. I read three Indian papers daily and learned a hell. Of a lot.

This is how hundreds of millions of Indians are still getting their sense of their own society and politics – do it their way. (1965-66 participant)
It was the most important year of my life and remains so. I grew up. I got courage. I came to appreciate the incredible good fortune of being born in America at the same time I learned to cross bridges to other cultures so vastly different than my own. I learned what poverty really was; I learned that it was possible to be wretchedly poor—and still proud, dignified and full of hope; I learned that people do cope whatever their circumstance; that they are resilient. I also learned that there are people resigned to their fate and to their place, however low, and that while this seemed so alien to me, it was important for them, as realistically they had no way of escaping it. And I had just one hell of a good time in a way that never repeated itself. I remain eternally grateful for the experience. (1965-66 participant)

As we see an India today in which the values of secularism and religious tolerance are waning and capitalism is on the ascent I am glad I was there in the twilight of Nehruvian socialism. (1970-71 participant)

Hyderabad participants

I am grateful to Joe and the other people who made that wonderful experience possible. When I got to Norway in the job which I have retired from (Professor of South Asian History at the University of Oslo), one of my aims was to work toward making an experience of India possible for students in Norway. To this end I was instrumental in the founding of the Nordic Center in India, which facilitates study and research in India for students in the Nordic region. I am glad that colleges and universities in the north Atlantic world seem to have understood the very great benefits which can come from having young people spend time outside their usual pursuits. (1964-65 participant)

My Indian mother Jayalakshmi whom I lived with in Hyderabad in 1965 told me that I had previously been her daughter in India in an earlier life. And that is the way it feels when I
return, as if I am coming home, as if my American life is a dream, as if the earth beneath my feet rises up to greet me when I land in India once again, with its odors of incense, betel nut, Detol, spices, hot frying oil, urination, car exhaust, and intense humanity. The rest of my life is pale in comparison to the brilliance of the colors around me in the Indian marketplace and when I close my eyes I hear temple bells overlaid by the sound of a dozen different dialects, the chanting of Sanskrit, the raucous shouts of hawkers and the constant honk of trucks and cars on the insanely crowded Indian roadways. In such moments, I am thrown back in time to that first morning in Delhi in 1965, when the world was just opening and everything was new and exciting, and I recognize how much of my life has continued to be lived in that awed amazement of the incomparable diversity of life around us. Thank you University of Wisconsin College Year in India Program which greatly expanded my world and gave me the gift of gratitude. (1965-66 participant)

It would be hard to summarize in a few words the immense influence my experiences in India and subsequent summer travel had on my life and worldview. My zest for travel was already well established but was definitely enhanced and grew. My curiosity about different peoples and cultures around the world has also continued expanding. Even today I seek out different local ethnic festivals in the Washington, DC area. And I have worked to instill in my children the same openness to new experiences, people, and travel. Three years ago, I went on a G Adventures group backpacking trip with my 22-year-old son for three weeks in India, focusing on towns in Rajasthan (including an overnight camel trip near Bikaner) as well as Delhi, Agra, and Varanasi. He obviously caught the bug, since when he later graduated from Oberlin College, he went traveling with two school friends for six weeks in Vietnam and Laos, hiking, meeting locals, and taking cooking classes. He is currently a biochemical researcher. My daughter, who is
younger than him, has already traveled to Uruguay, Greece, Germany, Spain, Israel, and Italy. She just graduated the University of Michigan and is working as a registered nurse in pediatric oncology. (1966-67 participant)

Overall, though, I have always said that this experience was the most valuable educational experience of my life and I have urged many others to pursue a year or semester abroad. (1968-69 participant)

I think it’s undeniable that my year in India has shaped the entire course of my adult life. I’m not much of a follower, or an adorer of the Leader, and I would never say I got to know Joe Elder with any depth or intimacy, but in Joe I had a chance to observe someone who I could recognize as an honorable person living a life worth living. As a young person the realization that “I don’t get him, but this guy is good” has been deeply important in shaping me, and in helping me recognize and respect goodness in others, even in people with whom I profoundly disagree.

Recounting the boring/annoying way every new person I met on the trains travelling through India would assume my ignorance and explain some basic thing or other to me “…the Ramayana tells…” I once asked Joe how he managed to bear it. “If you listen there’s always something new there” he said. So without getting sentimental, that’s my guru’s koan/mantra for me. That’s what I’ve been trying to do ever since. (1968-69 participant)

While I drifted away from the world of South Asian Studies and study-abroad, in general, those years proved to be formative. I learned patience (as hours spent drinking tea in homes, shops, banks and even a police station taught me), compassion (when I see people suffering across the world in the news, I remember people I met in India), and generosity (I was always
treated with such hospitality by those who, often, had much less). Perhaps most importantly, the experiences I had in India taught me perspective, which is hard to describe, but is a well I draw from daily.

Perhaps most importantly, my son, who is now 12 was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, an Autism Spectrum Disorder, when he was almost 5. While he had been struggling for years prior to receiving an official diagnosis, when we were told that he was on the Spectrum, it turned our world upside down. It helped me relate to how he experienced the world to think of it as a kind of cross-cultural experience. He would need to have many aspects of culture and communication explicitly modeled and intellectually explained in order to learn them. He would also, ultimately, need to learn a higher level of resiliency, self-awareness, and self-advocacy than other kids his age. On the flip side, being a cultural outsider gives him clarity into "the rules" of our culture and also an eye for the absurd and contradictory that he identifies with comedic effect. The journey is a joy and one I never could have guessed my time in India would have prepared me for.

Thank you both [Joe Elder and Joan Raducha] for all you have done to help students, such as myself, have this transformative experience! I am so sad that CYIP no longer exists. There is no substitute for a long period of immersion in such a completely different culture. And, personally, you both made a profound impression on my life. I appreciate being included in this request for reflections on the CYIP and look forward to seeing what the future holds. Best of luck with everything. (1996-97 participant)

Madurai participants

My experience on the UW Year in India Program was both re-affirming and life changing. It was re-affirming because it allowed me to reconnect with an important part of my
childhood—a part that I had found difficult to explain to my friends in the U.S. after I had returned from Sri Lanka and India in the mid-1970s. It was life changing because unlike my earlier experiences in the Foreign Service community overseas, the UW program was a language and cultural immersion program. Through learning and speaking Tamil, participating in the Mariamman festival, studying Bharatanatyam, watching Tamil films in theaters with loudly cheering crowds, eating dosa and idli daily, wearing saris and glass bangles and jasmine in my hair, and navigating my bicycle everyday through the Madurai traffic to take my classes, I came to experience and embody new ways of being in the world. I did not know it at that time, but that year would set me on my path to become an anthropologist and to return again and again to India, sometimes alone and sometimes with my own new family, to conduct ethnographic research on women’s health issues. When people say goodbye in Tamil, they literally say “having gone, I will come.” And so I have indeed continued to go and then come and my life has been richer for it. As a professor, I have tried to not only teach students in the U.S. about South Asia but to share with them the beauty of experiencing different ways of being in the world. As a mother, it has been important for me to include my children in my South Asian life as well in the hopes that they will have a broad appreciation for the cultural diversity of the world in which we live.

Today, many more American students participate in study abroad programs than was the case when I went on the UW Year in India program. This has been a positive development in the American college experience and I always urge students to take advantage of such programs if they can and I particularly encourage them to do a study abroad program in India. The vast majority of the study abroad programs for American students today are only for one semester and, although that is better than no foreign experience at all, I think the full year immersion that
the UW Year in India Program provided was crucial to be able to gain mastery over the language and to develop a deep connection with the people and the place where we lived; I would like to see more full year study abroad programs integrated into the American college curriculum in the future. It was such a privilege to have been able to spend my full senior year of college on the UW Year in India Program in Madurai. (1986-87 participant)

My entire career and my personal life were determined by my participation in CYIP. That it doesn’t still exist and most likely won’t ever get resurrected in its original form is a loss for South Asianists and study abroad generally. Despite all the current hoopla re: globalization of our campuses, creating global citizens of our students, etc., those goals will not be met if we continue the turn to short-term, tourism-like experiences rather than in-depth, slow and immersive experiences like CYIP. (1988-89 participant)

Learning another culture, particularly Indian culture, helped me to be more patient, kind, and understanding. Through teaching I’ve seen that the curiosity to learn about others is not in everyone and it makes me sad. I want for everyone to want to learn about someone they interact with who appears different in some way—from religion to disability to race, etc. Though I can’t make my students want to learn about others different from them, I think me wanting this from my students is important and certainly came from me knowing and loving another culture and way of life so intimately. Empathy is sometimes critiqued because even the best of people can fall short. However, largely motivated by learning another culture and way of life firsthand, I strive to cultivate empathy in my daily interactions, which extends to the classroom—my students with each other and also with the people who practice the different religions and cultures we discuss. Education is more important now than ever in our increasingly complicated world. People make so many foolish decisions motivated by fear and it seems that only education and
the understanding that brings can alleviate this on any level. I've always had a lofty daydream that the CYIP would be a requirement for every undergraduate. I know that this might never be a reality, but I believe that if I can get even a few students to study abroad in India while I meanwhile continue to share my ideas and worldview inspired by my own experiences, I contribute to helping form a more compassionate and understanding world. (2002-03 participant)

This program changed my life. I cannot even begin to express how it changed my worldview, because it is difficult to even remember my worldview before participating in the program (2003-04 participant)

Varanasi participants

It has now been more than 50 years since I returned home from that stimulating, romantic, and magical year. Although India isn't a direct part of my life, the experience was seminal. I have traveled broadly since then, and am comfortable as a visitor in other cultures (including Thailand, the home country of my daughter-in-law) and as a lawyer for architects working on projects around the world. I have a cross-cultural perspective on world affairs, and a multi-cultural perspective on national affairs. I am eternally grateful for the privilege of attending Berkeley and Banaras Hindu University through the College Year in India Program. (1964-65 participant)

As you know, I had a long career as a community college educator, primarily as an administrator. I believe that the India experience has been invaluable to me working with the diversity of my colleges and the confidence that I gained from the Banaras experience. (1965-66 Varanasi participant)
I remain closely tied to India and have always been extremely grateful for that initial introduction to the country. I went back in 1981-82 for dissertation research, then mostly lived there in the years from 1991 to 2007, and still spend several months there each year. It has been fascinating to observe the changes and developments there—I decided I could actually live there once CNG gas for cooking and refrigerators were widely available, and over the years watched India become less and less like a third world country while the U.S. did a turn around and starting heading more and more in the direction of becoming one. I’m working towards being able to retire from my work there, but a major factor holding me back in an unwillingness to give up spending part of every year there, not as a tourist, but as a working participant in a project I value in a country I love.

Going to India is no longer like going to an entirely different world as it was in the early 70’s, but nonetheless college students getting the opportunity to spend a prolonged period of time there, having to function within the culture and engage in study and research is an invaluable opportunity and providing such an opportunity a tremendous service of the Wisconsin College Year in India program. I’ve noticed that most of the programs being run now are one semester only and also are far more closely managed by American faculty/staff. I can see many reasons why that is a more manageable period of time, and have noticed that more student hand-holding seems to be required. However, I think that I benefitted immensely from the fact that we had a full academic year and were given so much freedom to find our way on our own. I also was a beneficiary of a time and of policies that made it possible for those of us without family financial support to participate in such a program. (1970-71 participant)
Living among and communicating with people across economic and social classes in India has affected my worldview for life. For me, language was the key to my intense experience and a special path to personal empathy. Certainly, living in Asia among people I would not meet at home would have itself encouraged understanding. But the emotional connections that came with direct communication have provided a very special window indeed. And the experience has extended beyond the one language and region. I have since sought out a humble and student-like approach to other new situations, which I have found to be magical for opening up avenues of communication. I wouldn’t hesitate to say that my basic views on people and culture were affected by the year I spent on the Wisconsin program. (1971-72 participant)

To summarize; the who was Joe Elder and his exceptional team. Caring professionals dedicated to the highest virtues of educational life. The where was India with all of her intensity and grandeur. The when was in the formative part of relative youth, a time when one hopes an Academic experience can contribute meaningfully to a fuller and richer adult life. The what was the well-designed program combining the skills to live in such a fundamentally different culture with the academic rigor of serious study. The how was through the sacrifice of extremely dedicated and hardworking professionals who found meaning in sharing their love of India with their commitment to the loftiest principles of higher education. (1973-74 participant)

Participation in the CYIP greatly influenced my choice of career and the trajectory of my academic life, both in terms of what I have taken up as my field of study, Burmese Buddhism, and in terms of the approaches I use. I took my PhD in Buddhist Studies from the University of Michigan, and while the program was focused on philology, I had always been equally interested in how texts have been used, understood and believed in by Buddhist communities across time. I’m especially interested in how religious ideas influence everyday lives across different strata of
societies; from elites to commoners, literati to the illiterate, and from those who embrace modernity to those who reject it. This interest of mine in the reception history of texts and in texts in social context I think can be traced back to a large degree to my undergraduate experiences in Varanasi on the Wisconsin Program. It certainly is not the only way one can study religious phenomena or texts, but it is the way I prefer, it is the way I feel most comfortable. (1973-74 participant)

I continued on toward my path – graduated as an elementary school teacher. (1973-74 participant)

Returning from that extraordinary CIYP year in 1973-1974, I guess you could say that it left me with the need to take many more years process the experience. I eventually ended up with a Masters and PhD in South Asian Languages and Literature from UW-Madison, and lived in Varanasi for two more years, both dissertating and helping run the CIYP program there. I did not remain in academia, however, as I came to desire work more (in my mind) ‘at the front lines’ of society. My experiences abroad profoundly influenced my decades-long interest in multicultural and culturally appropriate education. I became certified to teach in the public schools through the UW’s Teach for Diversity Program, and spent 15 years teaching in some of the most diverse schools in Madison. Most of the students in my classroom were of color, and sometimes I had as many as eight languages/cultures represented. My own experiences of being an outsider, living in and trying to decode an unfamiliar culture, being a struggling language learner, etc., gave me much understanding and empathy for my students. And boy, were my units on South Asian history and culture fun to teach! I still have a small museum’s worth of materials in my basement that I used to make it an immersive experience for my students. So, in this way, my years in
India continued to play themselves forward. That, and the deep connections that I made with people, both Indian and fellow Americans, from those years. (1973-74 participant)

Thanks again to Joe for all he has done for the Program throughout the many decades and by this work immersing so many students in Asian culture and giving them one of the most powerful experiences of their lives. One of the reasons my husband Scott and I took our children to live in Jaipur was because of the experiences we had on the Program. We wanted them to have the opportunity to live in another culture and understand that people really do think and live differently, that there is a different reality, our way is not THE way of living. They have each told us that when Sept 11 attacks occurred they felt like they reacted differently than their friends. When they saw people on TV wearing different clothing they could imagine knowing those people. Having also run a semester abroad program in India, I still feel that the year long program provided so much more opportunity to really understand another country. It provided more opportunity to really learn the language and enough time to get through the various stages of culture shock.

However, I am not sure that the Indians with whom the program had long term relationships fared as well as many of the US students. I think seeing a new group of students each year, coming with wealth and opportunity, was very difficult for some of the program assistants. (1976-77 participant)

College year-abroad programs, especially in ‘developing countries” are invaluable. They should be required of all students, especially in the current climate of misunderstanding, anger and conflict between the various cultures of the world. Similar programs for living/studying abroad should be available and encouraged for those not in college as well.
Thanks again to Joe for all he has done for the Program throughout the many decades and by this work immersing so many students in Asian culture and giving them one of the most powerful experiences of their lives. (1979-80 participant)

I feel like I got a birds eye view of the effects of geopolitics the year I was on the program in India. That was the year the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan – I remember that because our flight to and from India was via Ariana Afghan Airways – the program in Madison worked to change our flights back so we would not have to fly home via Kabul, which was then in a country at war. As I have continued to work on the region, including in Afghanistan and Pakistan, I have thought about that year – 1980 – which was a turning point in the region. The money and guns that poured into the region fueled the eventual rise of the Taliban, etc.

I had the opportunity to travel to Varanasi a few years ago while on an evaluation team for a USAID-funded project – so much looked the same but there were so many more people! Population was what I had studied when I was on the program in 1979-1980 and to see the same city nearly 30 years later – with more than twice the population. As I walked along the Ghats, I remembered fondly my junior year in India and thanked Joe Elder for his vision and passion for India and helping students experience it. (1979-80 participant)

I could say that my year in India changed my life, but it would be more appropriate to say it was where I found my life. I was already headed in certain directions, but I really found my roots during my year in India. Though I didn’t follow an academic career, I have continued to practice Tibetan Buddhism. I run a small meditation studio. I return to Nepal where I studied with a Tibetan doctor for a number of years, and in 2009 I was able to return to CUNTS in Sarnath to teach an acupuncture short course to Tibetan Medical students. (1980-81 participant)
I wish to state publicly and for the record that the College Year in India--any college year, anywhere--is an incredible opportunity for college students to get to live and study abroad; just that in itself makes it of value to both the University and students. In addition, the opportunity to study, and practice, a foreign language by complete immersion is invaluable, as is being able to observe, first-hand, a different culture and society, as is the chance to interact with and within that culture and society. Students have an opportunity to really learn, as well as observe, how other people live, what they eat, what they think about and talk about. It also means particularly American students have an opportunity to participate, first hand, in international relations. Meaning it gives American students a background in everything from arts, art history, cultural and social studies to international diplomacy--making them better able to function as employees in any business, or government, or nongovernmental organization that values international experience. Meaning, most. (1981-82 participant)

I have always loved South Asia, especially India, but these days I worry a lot about the direction the country is heading due to saffronization. I had been visiting India annually up until the year after Narendra Modi got elected. Somehow I now have less of a desire to visit there. I am also worried that some sort of equally sinister government will fall into place here in the US, which forces me to think seriously if I want to continue living in the United States. Only time will tell. The Wisconsin program, though, was a turning point for me, and I always encourage my own students to consider going on it. Sadly, my university isn’t very strong in South Asian Studies, despite my best efforts to build something here, so my success rate in recruiting students to go on the program have not been entirely successful. I wish I could do more. (1982-83 participant)
The UW CYIP was the most formative personal and professional experience of my life. My sister recognized how important this experience was for me and went on the program to Madurai three years later. It was equally special for her.

The CYIP was a springboard into my long-term love affair with India, and into my career in international education. While this career has taken a number of interesting incarnations, they have currently culminated in my position as the executive director of USIEF – the Fulbright Commission in India. This would not have been possible without the important support, and trust that I received from both Joe Elder and Joan Raducha.

The Fulbright program had been in existence in India since 1950, and had always been binational in terms of governance, but was solely funded by the US Department of State until 2008. I began my work as the ED in May 2008 and in July 2008, India agreed to become a financial partner in the program for the first time. This allowed us to initially double the program, and eventually triple the size of the program after both governments agreed to further increase their contributions in 2009. It has been incredible gratifying to work with both governments so closely on this prestigious program. Both the GOI and USG truly believe in the power of people-to-people diplomacy, and their partnership in funding the Fulbright-Nehru program exemplifies this. (1988-89 participant)

I currently live in Shanghai where I study Chinese and teach English. It is a real delight to reflect on the College Year in India Program and I do so frequently in my work and personal life. For a variety of reasons, I feel like this kind of experience was beyond the reach of many of my peers and family. They might still think I am crazy for doing it, but I know that this experience really changed me for the better.
This experience is featured prominently on my CV because I am really proud of having completed such a rigorous year of college, intensive as it was in nearly every respect. I felt then and still feel now that I was quite lucky to have had the awareness to seek out this kind of opportunity, and that it existed in the first place. Thanks Joe! Thanks, Joan I have subsequently received scholarships to other language programs including the AIIS Hindi program and now Chinese at Middlebury College this summer. (2004-05 Varanasi participant)

I'm now a Pre-K Special Education Teacher at a Title 1, high need school and look back fondly on my time in India as one of the most rewarding times in my life. I loved India for the way it made me see the world. I eagerly went back to India after graduating from college to participate in the Hindi certificate program through AIIS and my experiences in India made me search for a way to make a difference with children closer to home. I now have a family and dream of taking my toddler to India and to see old friends. Aside from becoming a Mother, India has been the most influential aspect of my life. (2005-06 participant)

Waltair participants

The year in India taught me to see the world with deep empathy through the eyes of others whose culture might be quite different from my own. This was and is a vast gift that has informed all the rest of my life and work. All of it.

We loved our year in India so fiercely. I will never ever forget the good-nature intelligence and energy of Joe Elder, whether in his home that summer in Madison, or riding up with that huge, warm smile on a moped in Vishakhapatnam. That year was transformational. So beautifully-spirited. It was in the widest sense blessed. (1975-76 participant)
My Year was a thousand stories, mostly good, and incredibly useful for the next 40 years. Disjointed, and perhaps not too helpful, but happy to talk and share more if you would like. (1976-77 participant)

Well, the travel agency Joe had booked our tickets through went bankrupt, and we were forced to scramble for stand-by seats going home. A pilot's strike left my stranded in London, and I spent three nights camping out in front of the old Pan Am office, hoping eventually to hop one of the few flights to New York. But none of that mattered. I had come back with two things I consider absolutely precious: a working knowledge of Telugu and a life-long fascination with all things India. Since then, I have visited India 22 times, in stints varying from two months to two years, and published several books and over 50 articles on the fishing communities of the Andhra coast. Most of my best friends are there. And if only India had a retirement visa program for foreigners, my wife and I would probably settle there permanently. None of this would have been possible without the Wisconsin program. Thanks, Joe, for everything! (1977-78 participant)

As mentioned above, my "year" in India quickly turned into three. I became an Indophile, undergoing dramatic changes in what foods I enjoyed, how I pronounced the English language, what clothes I wore, what political views I adopted, how I understood history, and how I viewed my own country's role in it. Over thirty years have now passed and I can confidently say that those years in India were the most transformative three years of my life. Happily, several friendships from those days have endured and I enjoyed renewing them while visiting Andhra for two weeks last spring. In some ways I feel as if the struggle to learn Telugu and adapt to local
customs, conventions and usages prepared me extraordinarily well for life's challenges more generally. (1981-82 participant)

I’ve often said that my year in India changed my life. How so? After my time in India, I could never believe for a second that life is fair. The accident of birth has always been crystal clear to me since my India experience. I’ve returned to India twice since 1983. The first time in roughly 1991. The second time was in 2011 to visit my daughter Nina who spent a semester in Delhi in her Jr year of college (SIT program). In 2011 we visited Vizag and it was wonderful. So much has changed along the ocean front (Indians love the beach now) and in the city; and still so much has not changed (the brutal poverty). Attached is a photo of a wall hanging in my office that includes two photos taken with Jyoti (our cook) and her the six year old daughter Samala, and one from 2011 when I visited Jyoti and Samala. I have long remained in contact with Jyoti and have periodically sent over money through Krisnayya. I will never forget Jyoti and Samala. (1982-83 participant)

I went into my year in India with as open a mind as possible. I am fully convinced that this approach allowed me to take in everything I experienced as fully as I did. While I did not have personal lows, that open mind let me see the highs and lows in Indian society. My interest in caste and its history, and the very notion that caste was in part created over time out of the solidarities that groups expressed, came from that year's experiences (and makes up much of the content of my book). That year's insistence on interacting deeply with the culture around me, taking in different and difficult ideas, listening to people from all walks of life, and then reporting on all of it has been profound in shaping who I am as an adult. My commitment to promoting the rights of Madigas and Malas stems from my exposure to their cultures that
year. Thirty years later, I can easily say that I am now the result of my experience in India in 1985 and 1986 on the University of Wisconsin's Year in India program. (1985-86 participant)
Conclusion

The innovative College Year in India Program included one thousand and seventy-nine students between 1961 and 2015. More than fifty of those students returned as student monitors to help guide and develop the program. While the program was administered by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the students came from colleges and universities from across the country. After completing their time in India and then their undergraduate degrees, some went on to graduate or professional schools, others entered the work force, still others became homemakers. But all carried in their minds a kind of understanding that arose from the rich and sometimes challenging cultural, academic, and personal experience that the program provided.

Many past participants cited the importance of a year-long experience in a largely unfamiliar non-Western country that encouraged language learning, provided the time to develop deep connections to Indians and their fellow Americans, and a deep appreciation of another culture and in turn better understanding of their own over the decades.

With gratitude and sometimes humor, they reported learning patience, developing compassion, recognizing generosity, appreciating kindness, and experiencing hospitality. The lessons learned in India enriched their family lives that unfolded over the years. And their careers in many fields, some focused in the U.S. others internationally, benefitted from the year in India: teaching from preschool to university, university administration, government work, journalism, writing, film-making, international education, finance, law, human services, poverty relief, and public health

There are many stories to be told about the impact of the CYIP on careers and in turn on broader communities. One of the stories is about Ken Swift and Diane Coccari. They were students
in Varanasi in 1973-74 and later married. Ken conducted his fieldwork project in Varanasi India on children’s games. After returning to the U.S., Ken and Diane coordinated the installation of an exhibit titled “In touch with India” at the Madison Children’s Museum. This exhibit introduced the children of Wisconsin and their families to broad cultural details and specifically to the artistic traditions of Mithila, a region in the north of India. Ken spent his career as an elementary school teacher and his spring-time unit on India, including the festival of kite flying, made his class an enviable one in which to study. Diane, after earning her Ph.D. in South Asian Studies, taught middle school and her social science units would be enriched with her knowledge about India.

In some cases, personal relationships led to life-long friendships. Marriages between program students or between a program student and an Indian were celebrated. Some former students returned to India as researchers or to travel, others never again set foot in India. But it is fair to state that everyone would follow the news of the world with a broader understanding after their year in India.

One of the stated goals of the program was to create a pool of experts who would focus their careers on India and South Asia. Lists attached to grant proposals document more than fifty books, twenty films and videos documentary and mythological, and countless articles focused on some aspect of South Asia or of the student experience in India.

Creating and administering the program in India presented numerous challenges over the years. The differing systems of education resulted in frustration for students and the creation of alternative structures for learning alongside the courses offered at Indian institutions of higher learning. For example, the program offered individual tutorials rather than large lecture classes, and small language classes focusing on spoken language rather than grammar. The program had to develop a system for how the largely independent fieldwork and tutorials would translate in
terms of credits and grades to their U.S. based transcripts. This meant that each students work had to be evaluated by a local advisor in India and then evaluated by faculty and staff back in Madison.

In any given year, students and administrators had to contend with strikes at local universities, changing government regulations that demanded different criteria for admission to universities which would satisfy visa requirements, and/or tensions between the U.S. and India. Flexibility and problem-solving skills were necessary. Female students had a special challenge to make sense of the ‘eve-teasing’ they faced, sometimes on a daily-basis. While societal attitudes about sexual harassment have changed all around the world over the years of the program, the addition of cultural differences made it difficult for some of the students. Many hard questions needed to be considered – what clothes to wear, how to limit interactions, why should a female have to limit her activities – and individual decisions made.

Faculty dedication is fundamental to any academic program and study abroad is no exception. Joe Elder’s dedication to the program was the key to the success of the CYIP. Numerous student respondents commented on the role that Joe Elder played in making the program successful. They comment on his energy and the support he provided to them. Joe wrote complicated grants to the federal government year after year that brought in more than $1,200,000 to support the CYIP, in order to keep the cost to students as reasonable as possible. Joe served as the liaison with Indian institutions and program staff, and never shied away from solving intricate bureaucratic problems. He called these problems ‘puzzles’ that he found challenging to solve. Joe Elder was the heart and soul of the CYIP.