

## AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Taylor B Joyner for the degree of Honors Baccalaureate of Science in Animal Sciences presented on May 31, 2006. Title: *Un Paseo Encantado*.

*Un Paseo Encantado*, an enchanted walk, is a collection of my observations and experiences in a study abroad program in Oviedo, Spain. My commentary on Spanish culture is based on reading I did prior my departure, in combination with my observations while in Spain. In six chapters, I explore the relative effect of small events on the overall experience, how preconceptions can influence an experience, and how these preconceptions are altered or dispelled. I describe the Spanish *paseo*, a bullfight, and the weekend market in Oviedo. There is an element of self-discovery in *Un Paseo Encantado*, as I make the transition from newly-wed, to student, to wife in the summer of 2005.

My perspectives in all parts of *Un Paseo Encantado* are influenced by my upbringing in a small, tight-knit community, and in a household which emphasized appreciation for other cultures. Although my thesis is not in my major area or related to my intended career in veterinary medicine, it is the culmination of a long-standing desire to travel and live outside of the United States.

Key words: Spain, Travel, Student, Bullfight, *Paseo*

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*Un Paseo Encantado*

by

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# *Un Paseo Encantado*

## **Introduction**

In *Homage to Catalonia*, George Orwell describes Spain as “White sierras, goatherds, dungeons of the Inquisition, Moorish palaces, black winding trains of mules, grey olive trees and groves of lemons, girls in black mantillas, the wines of Malaga and Alicante, cathedrals, cardinals, bull-fights, gypsies, serenades – in short Spain.” This is roughly the picture of Spain that I left the United States with, but my individual experiences created a personal image of Spain that is quite different.

My Spain is uneven sidewalks and streets, watching old women in high heels and red hair gossip on benches, holding my breath through clouds of cigarette smoke, and dodging baby carriages; it is cheap red wine, good bread, better cheese, and taking in the swirling color of the weekend market. In the two months I was in Oviedo, I wore out my sandals wandering around the city, usually alone, but never lonely. The whole population of Spain spends time in the street as though it were a huge communal living room; as an outsider, it allowed me to learn more about the Spanish people than I would have been able to otherwise.

Before I left for Spain, I filled my head with the writings of authors who had traveled or studied Spain. I began my academic journey with *The Spaniards* by John Hooper. This book covered the period of transition between Franco’s dictatorship and the constitutional monarchy that followed. It also commented on the culture of Spain and on some important historical events. It was a wonderful introduction to my studies, and it

along with *The Soul of Spain* by Havelock Ellis made up the framework on which my other studies were built. More than any other book, *The Soul of Spain* was responsible for creating my perceptions of what Spain and a typical Spaniard should be.

As with all preconceptions, some are bound to be upheld, while others are grossly misleading. One incident in particular stands out in my mind. I had read somewhere that it was considered very rude for a woman to enter a church without something covering her head. With this in mind, I packed two scarves which I could carry in my purse. My first opportunity to retrieve one came during a class fieldtrip. I felt quite proud that I was prepared, and carefully tied my scarf over my hair. Inside the church I noticed that I was the only one with anything on my head. I asked my instructor about it later, and looking a little stunned she said, “Not even my grandmother covers her head!” My scarves took up permanent residence in the bottom of my suitcase.

After exploring the present of Spain, I moved backwards into Spain’s past with Henry Kamen’s *A Concise History of Spain*. A surprisingly thorough book, *A Concise History of Spain* gave me a wonderful feel for the flow of events that had brought Spain to the present day. My vision of Spain began to assume some depth.

Feeling as though I had a solid knowledge base, I moved on to more detailed research on food and drink, the Spanish Civil War, gypsies, and the bullfight. My primary goal in researching the culinary traditions of Spain was to create a list of regional specialties that I could refer to during my travels. Without this list, I am sure I would have discovered many of the delicacies of Spain on my own, but I am thankful not to have wasted any time searching for *gazpacho* or *paella*. My study of the Spanish Civil War took a good deal of time and was one of my more rewarding avenues of study. The

importance of this relatively recent conflict was introduced to me in *The Spanish Civil War* by Jack Gibbs. This book gave me an overall understanding of the war, and a framework that I used to contextualize the events of *Homage to Catalonia* by Orwell, and *Volunteer in Spain* by John Sommerfield. Both Sommerfield and Orwell were English volunteers for the Republic, and their insights into the conflict as educated outsiders were extremely valuable.

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The bullfight and Spanish gypsies seem to make up the most well-known image of Spain. Accordingly, they made up a good portion of my research. *¡Qué Gitano!* *Gypsies of Southern Spain* by Bertha Quintana and Lois Grey Floyd provided me with a brief overview of the origins of the gypsies, but more importantly it introduced me to the art of flamenco. To an unprepared listener flamenco might be equated with the bellowing of a village drunk, but knowing its history and something of its spirit, I was able to fall in love with it at the outdoor concert I attended.

The same phenomenon occurred at the bullfight. Where others from my exchange program tended to see blood and death, I saw tradition, complexities, and the ceremony

of the fight. Barnaby Conrad's *La Fiesta Brava* and *The Gates of Fear* made a huge impression on me, and greatly influenced my perception of the bullfight.

With so many authors to compare my impressions to, I rarely felt lonely in my explorations of Spain. My authors had remarked on the aspects of Spanish culture which surprised or amazed them, what they found to be most different or interesting, and what they found to be most familiar. When I came across any component of Spanish culture which I had read about, I was able to compare my observations to those of my authors. However, there were occasions when I found myself in a situation I had little preparation

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My greatest discovery was the market that took place in the old part of Oviedo on Saturdays and Sundays. It was a hodgepodge of antiques, junk, old books, knickknacks, cheap clothes, umbrellas, gaudy jewelry, sometimes olives, once a stand selling nuts... always fascinating. In the market I had a chance to use my feeble Spanish, purchase cheap comic books for reading practice, and, in general, watch the ebb and flow of the weekend crowd. It was lively, noisy, colorful, crowded, but it never seemed rushed or frantic as do some crowds in America. The pace of life was different, and I loved it.

From the time I was small, my father has enchanted me with his stories of traveling throughout Europe, of living in Bolivia, and teaching at the University of Pisa in Italy. My desire to travel, and especially to study in another country, came from his stories as well as from the books he read aloud. My choice of Spain as host country was also influenced by my father who is fluent in Spanish. He gave me an early appreciation for the beauty of the language, and what better place to study Spanish than at its source in Spain. Although thoughts of traveling to Spain to study have floated in and out of my head for most of my life, they only solidified into a purpose in the fall of 2004. After deciding that it was time to go, events flowed quickly and smoothly. Oviedo's summer program stood out because I would not have to miss any school at OSU in order to attend. I applied, was accepted, and quickly plunged into making detailed arrangements for my

trip. The plan was to leave for Spain the weekend before classes were due to start on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005. I was signed up for both the July and August intensive language sessions.

When I completed my program at the end of August, Jeff Joyner, my boyfriend of a year and a half, would join me, and we would spend the remainder of the summer break traveling throughout Spain.

These plans were fully formed by Christmas of 2004, when Jeff proposed. Like the plans for Spain, plans for our wedding quickly flowed into place. We would be married on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005, five days before I was scheduled to leave for Spain. Our month of traveling in September was re-designated as our honeymoon.

My first days in Europe were a blur of exhaustion, shock at being separated from Jeff, and struggle as I realized that the route from Paris to Oviedo was more complicated than I had imagined. One night train, a twelve-hour layover, a night bus, a kind taxi driver, a delicious shower, and a scant one hour nap later, I was taking the placement exam for the program.

I landed in the beginners' class along with eleven others. There were seven other Americans; three of them were boys from my own program who stayed in the same dorm as I, the other four were in Oviedo with a separate study abroad program. The remaining four students were from countries other than the United States. Yannie was from Australia, eight months pregnant, and recently moved to Spain; Stefanie was a German who had been living in Ireland for the past three years and spoke English with an Irish accent; Dominica was from Poland, and Solomon was from Saudi Arabia. Solomon smoked like a chimney, and strolled into class between an hour and two hours late each day. Our teacher, Maria, matched exactly my conception of what a beautiful Spanish

woman should look like. She knew some English, although she rarely ever used it. Instead she explained concepts and words to us in Spanish, in such a clever way that I rarely felt lost in her class. She was intensely interested in our progress, and each class seemed like one long enjoyable conversation.

Within the first few weeks, my days settled into a predictable routine. Every morning I would wake up at about 8:00, have cereal in my room, then meander slowly to school, watching the shops prepare for opening at 9:00, and picking my way around the puddles left by the street-washers. Unlike my trips to class in America, which are generally hurried, I was able to let my mind wander and simply enjoy the morning. The air was mountain air and rarely smelled of city life. The cars were the only disruptive part of the walk. Spanish drivers must think they are indestructible. I, on the other hand, have no illusions of immortality, so crossing the street was always a bit of an adventure. Even the sidewalks were not guaranteed safe zones. Still, it would have taken more than dodging a few cars to disrupt my mornings. I generally arrived on time, then had to wait until Spanish time rolled around for class to start. More than once I was the only person in the room when the clock struck 9:00.

Although enjoyable, class was intense and not infrequently embarrassing as phrases were lost or altered in translation. I remember telling our class very seriously that after she bought groceries, the woman went home and *comió* (she ate) a dog.....I was trying to say that the woman *compró* (she bought) a dog, but no one heard me correct myself, they were laughing too hard. At our stage, mistakes like mine were common, and not infrequently our only clue that something grossly incorrect had been said was Maria's response. Sometimes it was simply a quickly-concealed smile and a correction; other

times she turned red or giggled uncontrollably while we clamored to know what had been said. Once it was a small bedside table with testicles that set her off, another time it was Solomon telling her that his favorite sport was lifting *besos* (kisses), rather than *pesos* (weights).

Class finished at 2:00, just as all the businesses in town were closing, so we students joined in the flow of people headed home for dinner. I generally ate alone in my room, savoring my diet of bread, olives, cheese, wine, and sometimes *chorizo* while I worked my way slowly through an adventure of Asterix and Obelix in Spanish. Soft and heavy with wine and good food, I followed my meal with an hour or two of siesta, sometimes in bed, or on sunny days out on my terrace. When sleep released me I either spent time on homework, or as was more often the case, I strolled down into town to spend time in the streets.

Bed was at 12:00 or 1:00 in the morning.

On the weekends, I spent as much time as possible in the market, and occasionally I would adventure over to Gijon for a theatrical production. In the opera house of Gijon I saw my first Opera: *La Bohème*. I was awestruck. I followed this experience with a reenactment of the Monty Python skits by four very talented Spaniards, and ended my cultural experiences with a modern ballet which impressed me even if it didn't capture me. I saw a bullfight, too. I still haven't been able to adequately explain my experience to anyone who does not already know about the ins and outs of the bullfight. Even the relatively simple aspects of Spain can be difficult to convey with all of their meaning.

This might be a good place for a summation statement; one in which I condense my experience into a few beautiful sentences. However, I cannot conclude something that

is not finished. Every day, if only for a second or two, I remember Spain and a new thought occurs to me, or an event which before was hazy suddenly makes sense, or I see aspects of *our* culture in a new light. That is the real beauty of an overseas experience, nothing is ever quite the same way it was before. It is as though my eyes have opened just a little more, colors are a little sharper, and previously commonplace things now, sometimes, have an element of Spanish magic.



**Illus. 1: An evening in Granada**

## Chapter 1: Spain

“So how was Spain?!” “What was it like?”

These were the two most common questions I received upon my return to the States, and they remain the two most difficult questions to answer. It is impossible to capture Spain in two or three sentences, or even paragraphs, and a summary of how Spain affected me would be even longer. The other difficulty is that generalizations on the culture and climate of Spain, along with my reactions to them, only make up a small part of my experience. There are some obvious cultural differences that impressed me, but what really made my experience meaningful were the thousands of little things that happened over the three months I was there. As Vincent says in *Pulp Fiction*, “You know what the funniest thing about Europe is? . . . It’s the little differences.”

The scale of these little things often makes it difficult to include them in answers to questions about what it was like, and what I did. Stories tend to be made up of significant events, memorable places, or cultural discoveries. The everyday occurrences which made my experience truly meaningful are not in-and-of-themselves remarkable, and don’t come to mind as story material. They are also the first memories lost, since they are small and unconnected. This was one reason I made daily journal entries while in Spain, and they have been invaluable in calling to mind events I otherwise would have forgotten. The following are excerpts from my journal:

“I have finally realized that the green boxes around town that have something close to ‘letter’ written on them aren’t for mailing letters, they are for the use of letter carriers. I kept trying to find the mail slot and never could ~ goodness I can be thick!” I



used to think learning the language would be the hardest part about living in a foreign country, but people expect language to be difficult so there are classes to take and the locals understand when you ask them to repeat themselves. However, there isn't a class for bathroom etiquette in the supermarket, or tipping waiters, or, alas, distinguishing between mailboxes.

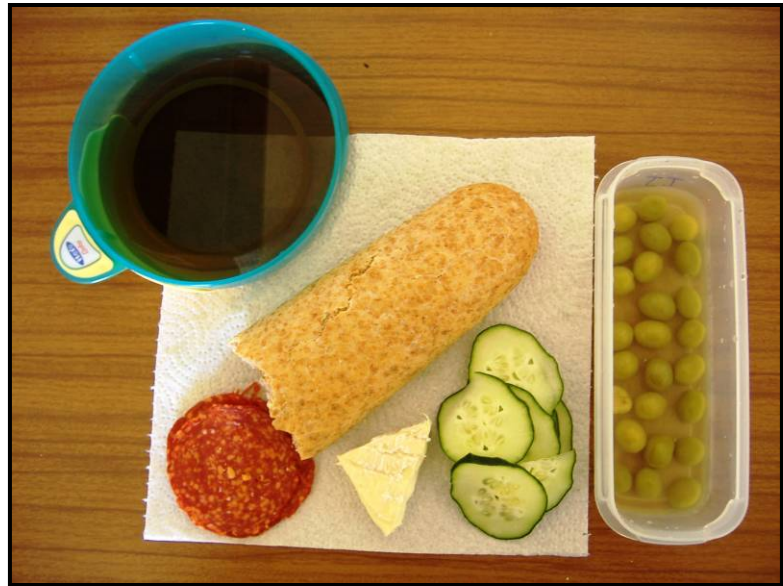


**Illus. 2: Which one is the mailbox?**

“After dinner, a tan, and a nap I wandered into town for an evening of strolling and shopping. In one store I was able to communicate my need for plastic bags, and I did so without sign-language thank you very much!” There were other times when I left a conversation wondering whether it was my Spanish or my skill in charades that had communicated my message.

“A few streets over a lady stopped me and asked for directions. I was able to help her navigate in *my* city. I was grinning for the next few blocks. I wonder what people thought.” I would be interested to know whether my directions got her where she wanted to go.

“How fortunate I am to have been brought up to appreciate the small things in life. I would almost rather have my bread, brie, *chorizo*, and *pepino* in my room than go to a restaurant.”



**Illus. 3: A dinner in my room**

“After marketing I returned to my quarters to eat my watermelon. Since all I had was a knife and a plastic baby spoon it was a tricky business, but I made some progress. I think next time I will just buy grapes.” On my following visit I did buy grapes, but was astounded to find that they had seeds, and were even more difficult to eat than the watermelon.

“The older man who runs the front desk during the morning and early afternoon has my room-key number memorized. When he sees me coming he gets it ready. It is one of those things that make you feel at home.”

“Stefanie’s ‘little thing’ was a mother cat with kittens which lives by the cathedral. She has charged me with taking pictures and feeding the mother occasionally. I plan to visit them tomorrow.”



**Illus. 4: Stephanie's cats**

“Back home I was going up the stairs lost in my thoughts when something made me look up. I had not heard him coming, but a boy was about a foot away from me going the opposite way. I was so startled that I gasped out loud and put my hand to my chest. Without pausing for thought the boy said, ‘I’m sorry, I’m so very ugly.’ This made me laugh and I continued on to my room.”

“The pregnant cat who lives somewhere around the dorms appears to have had her kittens. I would love to know where she has hidden them.” In a small sense, I had my own cat, although I was never able to get a picture of her.



“I wore my white airport dress. It rained. Needless to say we caught the first bus home so that my already scandalous dress wouldn’t become downright indecent.” I haven’t worn the dress since my return to the States. Perhaps one day I’ll work up the courage or indifference necessary to wear it in public again.

“We had quite a wander in our search for dinner. We picked a little wobbly table outside. With a TA-DA! Our waiter fixed bottle caps under the legs to stabilize it. We left a tip.”

“Our hostel in Barcelona had advertised a terrace, and as we had come across in Granada, what they are allowed to call a terrace is laughable. The ledge was less than a foot wide.” Since most of our time was spent in the city we wouldn’t have used a terrace much anyway. So instead of an unused terrace we got a story.



**Illus. 5: Our laughable terrace**

In addition to being the soul of an experience, minor occurrences can also have a disproportionate control over a person's emotions. In Spain I found this to be very true and to an extent I had never considered possible. In the States, the sum of a day's events will determine whether or not the day was a success, or a loss. However, an individual event generally doesn't have the power to define a day. In Spain, where I was cut off from any sense of normal, small things had a much larger impact on me, and in a sense were the only things my brain could fully process. Anything on a larger scale was too complex to grasp in a single day. As a result, everyday occurrences and decisions assumed an importance out of proportion to their significance. A journal entry from my first day in Spain illustrates this phenomenon:

“Here I am, finally in Spain, entering through the legendary portals, and all I can think of is sleep. Small decisions like ‘should I pay for a luggage locker so I can sleep on this bench?’ are almost insurmountable, and I probably won't make them.”

The relative importance of these small occurrences has made it difficult to adequately convey my experience to someone who has not been abroad. People who have never been taken completely out of their comfort zone will have trouble understanding the significance of little events. Even saying out loud that purchasing a cucumber was the biggest adventure of my day sounds funny to me now. Still, an excerpt from my journal makes the case abundantly clear:

My big drama of the day: buying a cucumber. I carefully selected my single, medium sized, evenly colored, straight, firm cucumber, wrapped it tenderly in its own bag, and looked around for any sort of sticker to identify it with. Seeing none I continued shopping. Once I reached the front however, I discovered my mistake. With a big show of holding up the line, the checkout lady informed me stridently of my mistake, snatched my cucumber, and marched to the produce section

where a sticker machine appeared out of nowhere to identify my purchase. I left the store clutching my €0.30 cucumber protectively.

My shopping dramas didn't end with the cucumber incident. Some, like the tale of the cucumber were tragedies, others were complete success stories:

On my way home I found a *supermercado*. It was open which surprised me a little since it was the siesta hour, but I decided to see what I could find. I exited victorious with sliced *chorizo*, brie, olives, cereal with chocolate pieces, cherry tomatoes, and individual fruit juice boxes which promised me multi-vitamins. It is amazing how the normally mundane task of shopping can be made into an exciting event whose successful completion is worth celebrating.

Although I don't imagine it approaches the feeling a predator has after a successful hunt, I think the two feelings are related:

She moved slowly from aisle to aisle, eyes darting from side to side in search of a deal. But not any deal, no, this deal had to be special, it had to go with bread, satisfy nutritional needs, and ... and ... it had to be table ready... It was a long and difficult search, dodging old ladies, a shelf stocker ... moving carefully through the check-out line, a sprint to the door... and she was home free...victorious!

To a point, having a heightened awareness of the events occurring around me and to me was beneficial. I had a chance to enjoy the ordinary to an extent beyond normal, but the reverse held too, and there were more upsetting triggers than before. It was a bit like PMS in that the smallest thing could be overwhelming. Mentally, I knew I shouldn't be upset by something as small as a missing button, but emotionally I had no choice, at least not in the beginning. As the days and weeks passed, I was pleased to notice that my comfort zone expanded, until there came a time when I felt as though I could handle anything with the same composure I would have in the States. On July 30<sup>th</sup>, one month after my arrival, I had a chance to test this, and was pleased to find that I had been correct. My journal entry from that day reads as follows:

I arrived in Gijon at about 8:00 for the 8:30 performance, and with half an hour to walk a couple of blocks and find my seat, I took my time and meandered towards the theatre, window shopping and taking note of

places I wanted to re-visit. At about ten after eight I got out my map so I could beeline for the theatre, and discovered that I was standing with my back to it. I didn't know whether to be proud that my wandering feet had taken me to the theatre, or embarrassed that it took a map to show me what was in plain sight.

Unfortunately, *Monty Python* was being held in another theatre...between the efforts of the ticket lady and a kind couple I was directed towards bus #10 and *El Corte Ingles*. Three weeks ago the prospect of being late would have had me in tears, and even in the States I think I would have been more upset than I was tonight. This evening everything flowed. The bus arrived almost the moment I found the shelter and a kind man made sure I got off at the correct stop. I was able to tell the usher why I was late and she showed me quietly to a seat in the back.

My ability to accept the situation at hand and to work out a solution without becoming upset was a clear sign that I was adjusting to life in Spain. Throughout August and into September this feeling of belonging only increased, although I never quite lost my sensitivity to the little events which made up my days.

## Chapter 2: My Love Affair with Spain

I have always traveled Europe with the belief, born of fairytales and historical fiction, that Europe's culture and people surpass those of the United States. All of my favorite books: Tolkien's series, *All Creatures Great and Small*, my fairytale collection, stories of dragons and princesses, of knights and ladies, of courtly romances and love, Georgette Heyer, and even James Bond and Sherlock Holmes, all of them created for me an ideal Europe. My readings prior to Spain, although of a more factual nature, did little to dispel my fantasy. If anything, they served as proof that Europeans, and Spaniards in particular, are a noble race. I was carried away by historical, but dramatic accounts of bullfighters, war heroes, gypsies, the courageous poor, the conquistadors of old, and the kings and queens who have sought to control them.

In a way I think this set me up both for disappointment and for a greater enjoyment of Spain. If I met someone vulgar or unpleasant, I felt a little betrayed as though they had forgotten the responsibilities which living in *Spain* gave them. On the other hand, my imagination could fill the palaces, ruins, cathedrals, and streets with throngs of people from my readings.

Prior to my adventure in Spain, I had been out of the United States three times: twice in Europe and once in Mexico. Each time I left I came back with a slightly different perception of who I was and what 'abroad' was. However, none of my prior trips were for anything but sight-seeing. In a sense, I never had a chance to really *be* in any of the places I was visiting, because my time was taken up with travel. I would arrive in a pre-determined city with my *Green Guide* clutched in my hand itching to see the buildings



and ruins described within. A day of walking and sight-seeing followed, in which I was transfixed by the visuals and carried away by the magic of being in a foreign place. In Oviedo it was a whole new story. For the first time, I saw beyond the ancient buildings and artifacts, the history, the past, and met with the present of a foreign country. In the pre-departure packet I received, the authors described this transition as culture shock. I will describe it as my love affair with Spain.

When I arrived, I was without doubt in the honeymoon mentality, both as a result of my recent marriage, and my high expectations for my trip. I was infatuated with Spain and saw it as a fairytale land, full of magic and wonder. It was dazzling. There was a downside, however. The other Americans in the program were unaware of the effect their intrusion had on my fairytale and their oblivious attitude irritated me. I did everything possible to separate myself from them physically and mentally, calling them tourists and myself a traveler, someone sensitive to the idea that I was in a place of elevated culture, someone who could appreciate it on more than a superficial level.

From the time I was small I have enjoyed the joke, “If it is tourist season, how come we can’t shoot them?” Every summer the roads of our beautiful little community become clogged with the atrocious monsters that are RVs. People arriving so that they ‘can enjoy the beauty of the area’ not realizing that by being there with their oversized vehicles they compromise that beauty. I preferred seeing family cars bristling with camping gear and overstuffed with kids. This attitude towards tourists made me very leery of labeling myself a tourist when traveling abroad. So instead, I called myself a traveler and I even wrote a paper in high school explaining the difference so that I would feel secure that I had separated myself from *them*. As I prepared to leave for Spain, I was

very concerned about being stuck with a bunch of Americans who I was sure would act like tourists. Part of my concern came from my perception of Europe as a place of uncompromised higher culture for whom the yearly invasion of Americans was as painful as the invasion of tourists was to me in Wallowa County.

When I arrived I was excruciatingly aware of the other Americans and how we must appear to the locals. Unfortunately, since we were all living in the same dorm, it was hard to escape association with them. English was rampant, as were some of the attitudes I had hoped the group would not bring with them. For instance, I overheard some criticizing the dorm because it wasn't a model of modern comfort. "My sink is so disgusting! It's like something out of the Stone Age!" "I don't even want to know how old my mattress is." "I'm afraid to take off my shoes." "Does anyone else have disturbing stains on their sheets?" A few people were excited about a teacher not taking attendance, the idea being that they could skip class without it affecting their grade. I also overheard plans for group parties in one of the lower lounges.

Had I been in America, these sentiments wouldn't have bothered me. Discontent and indolence are often part of the college experience; on an adventure where I felt every moment must be taken advantage of and appreciated, these negative things irritated me. It hadn't occurred to me that some people were in Oviedo simply to fulfill the requirements of their curriculum, not necessarily for the culture or the chance to learn Spanish from a native speaker. This didn't hold true for everyone, but for enough of a minority that the group at large seemed to be affected. My situation reminded me of a passage in *Volunteer in Spain* where Sommerfield is realizing that just because the cause is glorious and worth fighting for, not all of the men he is fighting with are noble or worthy. He wishes that

“everyone . . . be altogether worthy of the cause for which he is fighting.” I was wishing that “everyone be altogether worthy of the program he is participating in.”

My conclusion based on these first impressions of the group was that in order to eliminate as much English as possible from my daily routine, I was going to have to eliminate as many fellow participants as possible. According to Dean MacCannell, my attitude was typical of a “touristic attitude, a pronounced dislike, bordering on hatred, for other tourists, an attitude that turns man against man in a they are the tourists, I am not [*sic*] equation.”

This decision set the tone for the rest of my experience, although I was not altogether spared from the painful associations I was afraid of.

Each program participant was given a black single-strap book bag for program materials. They weren’t bad looking, but as I walked home behind a group from our program the uniformity created by those bags made us stand out. Horrified, I realized that their actions would be associated with me since I was also branded.

The nightmare continued during my first shopping. As I strolled up and down the aisles pondering my choices I could hear, “I don’t even know what this is,” “what the fuck is this,” “they don’t have any \_\_\_\_\_,” and so forth. When I passed by them they would sometimes speak to me, asking me to share in their consternation or disbelief. I flinched inwardly whenever I had to add to the English floating about the store.

The other thing I was acutely conscious of was the volume of the conversation. It sounded as though we were boastfully trumpeting our origin to the surrounding blocks. I am not ashamed of being an American, but I am well aware of our reputation as loud,

obnoxious tourists, and it pained me to see my classmates confirming the stereotype I was particularly anxious to escape.

The program organizers seemed to have a similar opinion, and in an “important notice” to program participants they warned us that:

Drunken and disorderly behavior is socially unacceptable and definitely not tolerated in the residence halls and during University or AHA sponsored activities. Nor is it wise for you to lose control in this way during your free time. The present political situation has caused the US and its citizens to be highly visible. Now more than ever, it is very important that you do not cause a negative impression of Americans in the host country.

My perception of Americans as an unwelcome invasion wasn't helped by the fact that in those first weeks I didn't notice any Spaniards who would have broken my stereotype that I was in a country of higher culture. They were all patient, tolerant, better educated, and it seemed to me then that they were all politely resigned to our presence.

It wasn't just the Spaniards from whom I was hoping to escape judgment; I didn't want to make a bad impression on my foreign classmates either. From the onset it seemed as though they were the better students both in behavior and dedication. I resolved to socialize with them rather than with my American counterparts in an effort to disassociate myself from my countrymen. It worked to a point. On our first program excursion I sat next to Solomon, my classmate from Saudi Arabia. At that point, with so little Spanish, we weren't able to say much to each other; instead he showed me pictures of his family on his palm pilot. Then he showed me the two video clips and one sound clip he had saved. It was an interesting selection: a clip from a music video of a popular American band, a cartoon clip of Tom and Jerry, and a sound clip of Bush saying, “I approve this message.” Solomon then asked me, “Why the war in Iraq?” It was extremely

frustrating not to be able to give him an answer which would justify it. I felt as if I was somehow at fault because I was from the U.S.

My favorite times were when I was alone, and could forget the political situation in America, forget stereotypes, and enter into the fantasy Spain which I imagined was real. One morning I was leaving *El Arbol*, a little corner grocery store, and nearly ran into a man holding a shell. I hesitated, half poised to put the change I was still holding into it but the fleeting thought that he might not be a beggar prevented me and I passed by. He seemed too calm and poised to be a beggar.



**Illus. 6: *El Arbol*, a little corner grocery store**

Halfway down the block it occurred to me that he might be a pilgrim. The scallop shell was adopted as the pilgrims' emblem on the journey to Santiago de Compostela, and I thought that perhaps he was using it to indicate his status.

Only rose-colored glasses can turn beggars into pilgrims, and during my honeymoon period in Spain I was never without a pair. They had the dual effect of making Spain seem perfect, and my unfortunate countrymen very far from ideal. The combating emotions of my double vision combined with the effects of my abrupt departure from Jeff made it difficult to maintain an attitude conducive to fantasy. I began to notice things that started eroding my fairy tale. Ugly buildings existed in Spain.

Spaniards had the capacity to be offhand or rude. Spain was not perfect. On the twelfth day of July I wrote: “I won’t let this be my final opinion, but the population of Oviedo doesn’t seem to be very friendly. I don’t think I’ve ever had one of my tentative smiles returned on the streets, and at the checkouts in grocery stores and the ticket counters in Irun, it is generally an unsmiling person who deals with me.”

Fortunately I am a cheerful person by nature, so my brief disillusionment didn’t last, and as Oviedo shed its cloak of fantasy to reveal a real city full of living people, I lost my heart again. With fresh eyes I was able to reevaluate several of my earlier

observations in addition to making new ones that weren’t possible before.

For instance, I ran into the beggar with the shell again, and I realized after my second encounter that when I first saw him I

*wanted* him to be a pilgrim,



**Illus. 7: Oviedo from my window**

so I half let myself believe it. Besides, as our teacher Maria told us, the pilgrims used the shells to drink from, not to beg with.

As one might expect, love without delusion is sweeter than blind infatuation, and my relationship with Spain, and Oviedo in particular, deepened. On August the sixth I wrote: “It doesn’t happen as often as it should, but occasionally I am filled with an overwhelming thankfulness that I am who I am, and that I have been blessed with the life

I have. Only a moment ago I had one of these flashes. I was eating olives, drinking red wine, reading *Don Quixote* and listening to Oviedo through the open door of my room. How fortunate I am to be here!”

By this time the July session was drawing to a close and the majority of the first batch of participants was leaving. I was very thankful to have another month. I couldn’t imagine leaving just when I was beginning to truly appreciate Spain. I had too much left to discover, too many walks yet to take, and too many more adventures to have to be thinking of leaving. My first month in Oviedo had been a jumble. I had blamed people for not smiling in the streets or demonstrating their elevated culture . . . and yet Oviedo was becoming more real to me than many of the fairytale memories I had of Rome and Pisa where I spent several magical days with Jeff two summers ago.

The second month of the program went quickly. By the time the new batch of Americans arrived, I had an established routine which often excluded them, but unlike the first month, it did not

bother me so much to be with them. If Spain wasn’t perfect, I didn’t feel as though we needed to be perfect.

I was still sensitive about being stereotyped, but I needn’t have worried. Not once did a person guess that



**Illus. 8: My August classmates**

I was American. People usually guessed Scandinavian. One older woman ran through a list of four or five countries before giving up. When I told her I was from the U.S., she was surprised and interested, not disapproving as I had feared. It was wonderful.

As August drew to a close, I began preparing for my reunion with Jeff and our month of honeymooning. I was no longer worried about being a tourist as opposed to a traveler, and my hatred of other tourists had subsided. Spain was not going to change its face for either, so my experiences depended only on my willingness to enter into them wholeheartedly. Other tourists were in Spain for the same reason I was, and although their method of searching for and entering into experiences were different than mine, it didn't make them any less valuable. Other tourists had also lost their power to take away from my appreciation of Spain. They were just more people in the streets. Spain didn't disappear because they were there, and if I looked, I could always find what I was searching for, whether this was an uninterrupted view, a peaceful street, or a quiet restaurant. Even more interesting was the feeling that neither label, tourist or traveler, applied to me anymore. In Oviedo, I was simply another student, I belonged, and I felt excited as though I were just about to *begin* my trip, rather than finish it after two months of being in Spain.

This feeling of belonging continued throughout the rest of Spain. Madrid didn't strike me as foreign which surprised me, since it obviously was for Jeff, and I was made aware of how accustomed I had become to Spain. Spain was normal now, and I began to be very curious about returning to the U.S.A. I wondered how different it would feel after being so long in Europe.



Unlike my previous trips, I didn't feel any pressure to see everything and go everywhere. I had learned to appreciate the present of Spain, which meant that I could be anywhere doing anything and be surrounded by the living culture of Spain. Before it was only the culture and history of a place that was able to convince me I was in another world.

In general, Jeff and I spent our days wandering through the streets of whatever city we were in, window shopping, people-watching, and taking in the living atmosphere of our surroundings. For the most part we avoided crowds although there were several tourist attractions which I had read enough about to make sure we saw. One was the Cathedral in Seville which Havelock Ellis felt was alive as no other great church could be. I am afraid my impression was quite different.



**Illus. 9: Strolling past the 'No Dogs Allowed' sign**

Although the following quote from *The Soul of Spain* referred to the Prado, I had plenty of occasion to remember it in the Seville Cathedral: “[Here] may be seen the American tourists who are driven up to the door in flocks, and march rapidly through the Prado in the track of a guide who hastily names the masterpieces in Broken English. The tramp of their weary globe-trotting feet echoes afar. . . .” I think my disappointment in the

cathedral can be attributed to having to dodge through the aforementioned plethora of guided tours in order to see the sights. We ran into one tour with particular frequency. It was led by a large, shrill woman holding a huge plastic sunflower. What with all the people-dodging, one really didn't have time to appreciate the building or search for its history in the stone or the atmosphere. One felt as though the church itself had averted its eyes so it wouldn't have to acknowledge the tumbling mass of people inside it.

The adjoining orange garden was much nicer. Since there weren't plaques in four languages on every tree, people passed through relatively quickly, leaving us in comparative peace.

Peace. Spain was all about peace and quiet, even amid the rowdiest fiestas. The pace of life was such that one breath could be taken and appreciated before the next need be thought about. The contrast with home is a little dramatic and it seems like a lifetime ago that I was in Spain.

### Chapter 3: *Paseo*

If you want to learn about the history of a people, you visit the museums and monuments created to immortalize the ages. If you want to learn about the people in the present time, you have to go where they go, and in Spain, the most obvious place to do this is in the streets during the *paseo*. More than anything else, walking, and watching other people walk, taught me about Spain.

When I was young,  
I remember my mother  
leaving the house to go on  
long walks with her friends.  
As did many adult  
activities, walking just to  
walk seemed like a silly  
waste of time. There were  
games to be played,



**Illus. 10: A *paseo* street**

adventures to be imagined, a brother to be preyed upon, and a multitude of other activities worth much more than a walk. As I grew older I began to recognize the physical benefits of walking and so endured them from time to time, hopefully with a book or a friend or a dog or any other form of distraction. Afterwards, I would gratefully sink onto our couch for a read or a nap, secure in the fact that I had done my duty for the day. It was only late in high school that I first began to appreciate walks as an activity in-and-of-themselves. I used walks as a way to escape from the pressures of teenage life and

as a time for long talks with my mother. Then I left for college and walks took on yet another function. Evening strolls on our gorgeous campus helped me deal with homesickness and school stress. My first date with Jeff and a great part of our early courtship took place on the sidewalks of Corvallis on long evening walks. On a walk, there is no reason to fidget, no nervous energy to interfere with the conversation or shared silence. The body is occupied so the mind and heart can be foremost.

In Spain, walking has been recognized as a national pastime in the *paseo*, and as any shared activity brings two people together, the *paseo* brings together the population of a city in a nightly ritual where for several hours, the city lives in the streets. Mothers walk with young children dressed like expensive dolls. Couples, from the very young to the very old, wander about holding hands or relax on benches, groups of friends young and old stroll together, mother-daughter pairs gossip, and baby carriages add to the happy chaos. It gives the city a feeling of life altogether



**Illus. 11: An older couple relaxes on a bench**

different from the crowded-street feel of U.S. cities. It makes one feel that the population here is complete, well-rounded, each stage of life flowing seamlessly into the next. In U.S. cities, on the other hand, it feels as though only a cross section of the population is in the streets: teenagers too young to drive, those too poor to drive, and those who, by some

miracle, live in close proximity to their place of work. This is not to say that people in the U.S. do not walk. Many do, either for exercise or for pleasure, but it is not a unifying activity as it is in Spain.

The fleets of baby carriages, squadrons of old men with canes, and the old women gossiping on benches are conspicuously absent.

After traveling in Spain, I see it as a great loss to our



**Illus. 12: Old women gossiping on benches**

society that we have no tradition of *paseo*.

In Spanish society, the *paseo* is an important way to stay connected with friends because it is not at all customary to invite people into one's house in Spain. The home is a family's sanctuary. Therefore, in order to see friends, it is necessary to be where they are, in the streets, in bars, cafes, etcetera. In essence, the streets become the front yard, back yard, and living room of the family.

There are two ways to participate in the *paseo*, either by walking, or by sitting in the *paseo* streets and people-watching. People-watching in Spain can be peaceful, restful even. An activity well suited to a summer evening, and one I indulged in frequently.



My observations while people-watching were numerous, sometimes insightful, sometimes not. On one occasion I simply recorded bits of what I saw in an attempt to convey the visuals of an Oviedo *paseo*.

Three mullets ~ugg~

One set of dreadlocks

Old ladies in high-heels

A dog the size of a large rat

A man runs by with a phone pressed  
to his ear

Mother and daughter stroll by talking

A German Shepard with arthritis

Three women giggle their way home  
from a shopping spree

A small dog with a hip problem  
~do the owners know?~



**Illus. 13: Dressed up like matching dolls**

A little girl out on the town with her big sister

Men in business suits walk without haste

A man catches water in his hands for his dog

An old woman waits for her friend on my bench

A couple in love, she has her head on his shoulder

On a separate occasion, I was inspired by Havelock Ellis to pay particular attention to the way Spanish women walked. In *The Soul of Spain* he wrote: “A beautiful walk seems to mark all the races which have produced a fine type of womanly beauty, and the fact that it is so rare in England and America arouses some misgivings as to the

claim of our women to stand in quite the first rank of beauty; The Spanish woman like the Virgilian goddess, is known by her walk.”

With the intention of proving or disproving this assertion, I planted myself on a bench and scrutinized the walk of every female who passed. It may be that I could not appreciate another woman’s walk as well as a man might, but despite this handicap I was able to come to a fairly solid conclusion. My first observation was that the women of Oviedo were experts at navigating treacherous terrain in high heels. Their daily struggle to stay upright had given them fit, shapely legs that may help a man appreciate how they walked. However, their actual manner of walking was not so different from women elsewhere, except perhaps that their pace was more leisurely. In order to tell for sure, I would need to see a number of women without high heels on fairly level ground, and in Oviedo such a thing was not possible.

Once, after purchasing ice cream from a street vendor, I sat down on a bench to people-watch while I ate it. Across from me were three older gentlemen who were also people-watching. It appeared to be a habitual pastime of theirs because they didn’t talk to each other, just watched and looked contented. After twenty minutes of absorbed silence they folded their unused newspapers, gathered up their hats, and without a word or a backward glance, wandered off in different directions. It was almost more fun to watch people people-watch than it was to people-watch myself.

Lighthearted observation of individuals was key to my enjoyment of the *paseo*. Usually my evenings of people-watching ended with an assortment of disconnected images chasing each other around in my head. Several times, however, I was able to involve myself more completely.

On one occasion I was relaxing on a bench outside the *Salasas* shopping center. I had purchased an Asterix and Obelix book (in Spanish of course), some peanuts, and a diet coke, and was working my way through the first few pages when my concentration was interrupted by a little girl dressed in red. She had a bib on and was eating a lollypop. She sat down next to me, and I couldn't tell which of my three purchases she was most interested in. I didn't have her attention for long though, and soon she was joined by a boy who I am pretty sure was her brother, and a girl who came to join in the fun. The little girl's name was Catalina, or something close, but I never learned the names of the other two. Over a period of about fifteen to twenty minutes they raced around the benches making quite a ruckus. The boy, it seemed, had instructions from his mother to clean Catalina up. He chased her up and down the length of the bench next to me managing to get her bib off, put her jacket on, take away her sucker (a particularly ferocious battle), and wipe her face with a damp napkin. Catalina had a grand time exercising her lungs in protest and running around the benches. Her brother was pleased to have such an attentive audience in me, and had a good time showing off. Catalina was probably between two and three; the boy was closer to five or six. When he saw that I was trying to get a picture of them, he



**Illus. 14: Catalina, her brother, and their friend**



grabbed his sister to hold her still and I took my shot. Their freedom to interact with strangers was charming. It was only by careful observation that I was able to discover who the parents were. They were sitting at a table about ten yards away enjoying an evening coffee.

“*Hasta Luego!*” the boy called to me as I left.

More than once I was surprised by the degree of freedom that small children in Spain enjoy. The second time it was brought to my attention was while I was in line for tickets at the theatre in Gijon. The woman in front of me had a little boy of about three or four. He frequently ranged out thirty feet or more to play, without her showing the least concern. He was also very comfortable with strangers and visited with quite a few. At one point he gave me his toy dolphin to play with.

In Wallowa County this kind of freedom among children is natural, but I haven't seen it in U.S. cities much, especially the freedom to interact with strangers. I have seen mothers snatch their children up to prevent possible interactions, at the same time smiling and apologizing to the stranger their child was ‘bothering.’ As soon as they turn to walk away you can see them fiercely whispering to their child, probably delivering a lecture about the dangers of talking to strangers. Safety is so big in the States these days that I think a lot of life's little pleasures are being lost in the quest for security.

By the time Jeff arrived in September, walking and people-watching during the *paseo* had become one of my favorite pastimes, and I was very excited to share it with him. As expected, he immediately took to it, and together we spent most of our evenings in the streets. I remember one evening particularly well. We were in full retreat from a

souvenir shop when we ran into an alley, which I'm sure was the inspiration for Ali Baba's cave of treasure. Gold coins bedecked silk scarves waiting for their dancing girls, mirrors winked from skirts and wall hangings, sandals, drums, opium pipes, extravagant cushion covers, teapots Arab style, chess sets of 'ivory,' wooden treasure boxes, and lamps for both illumination and for wishing. The alley was too small for cars and a scaffold set up above us enclosed the space so that it felt like we were in a long twisting tunnel.

We finally did wind our way to the end, exiting with only a single purchase. From the horde of treasure, we had selected a small hand-made drum for a friend back home, but we lingered for a good while examining a display of goatskin lamps. After tearing ourselves away, we set off down a road, which promised a good view, but yielded little more than a constant stream of traffic that forced us to hug the walls of the houses and shops on one side or the low stone barrier on the other. Still it was fun. During *paseo*, everything was bright and interesting, and vehicles were just another element of the experience.

The Spanish *paseo* was a perfect setting for love. The vibrant populace, the narrow streets, the ancient buildings, the sounds of summer, all conspired to fill the very air with life and energy. It felt as though the love which Jeff and I were radiating was caught up by our surroundings and amplified.

## Chapter 4: The Bullfight

When one thinks of Spain, images of dark alluring women dancing flamenco and impossibly handsome men fighting bulls must come to mind. These arts are appealing in the sense that they are utterly Spanish: colorful, passionate, alive. However, it is much easier to purchase tickets for flamenco than it is for a bullfight. There is no blood in flamenco. Still, when one is in Rome . . . .

In accordance with this mantra, I gathered my courage and bought a ticket to the August bullfight in Gijon. Also attending were Heidi and Garret, a newly married couple in the exchange program.

In *The Gates of Fear* Barnaby Conrad states: “Bullfighting often hits writers so hard when they are first exposed to it that they get carried away when it comes time to sit down in front of the Smith-Corona.” I don’t claim to be a writer, but my audience has been forewarned.

To minimize the impact of the bullfight I read several books on the topic, the most important of which were *La Fiesta Brava* and *The Gates of Fear*, both by Barnaby Conrad. These books provided me with all the information I needed to understand the basic mechanics of the bullfight, and the more I learned the more intrigued I became. I began to wonder what my own reaction to a fight would be. I had no illusions that in these modern days the bulls were allowed to live. Apparently quite a few tourists attend under this assumption, and I imagine it is a nasty shock to learn otherwise. One girl from our program sat next to a man who had brought his children to the bullfight under this assumption. They cried the entire time. In addition to being prepared for the death of the

bull, I also felt that I understood the elements of the bullfight as well as some of the rules and regulations.

As I look back on it, I see that it is imperative to know what is happening in the ring and why. Otherwise it is difficult to get caught up in the action, much like going to a football game and not knowing the rules or even the purpose of the game. Without any previous knowledge, it would be too easy to think that killing the bull was the purpose of the bullfight, which is not at all the case. The bull is killed because he has 'learned Latin.' In other words, he has learned what he needs to know to look beyond the cape and kill the matador. He is too dangerous to be allowed to live. The real purpose of the fight is to show off the skill and courage of the matador, and though a good kill is obviously part of that skill, it is not the sum of it.

I am not sure what my reaction would have been had I not read, but I can only assume that I would have enjoyed it much less since I would have had a harder time understanding the purpose of each stage of the bullfight, and my mind would have been more occupied with the pain and death of the bulls. As it was, I became so wrapped up in what I was watching, trying to identify all the elements of the bullfight (and explain them to Heidi), that I didn't have time to contemplate the reality of the blood and death of the bulls.

It was a bit like the time a group of guy friends and I went in search of firewood trees and ended up doing more 'bird-hunting' than 'tree-hunting.' After killing a couple of grouse apiece they hounded me to 'get' one. Up until that point I hadn't really handled a gun, but I gave in and they showed me where the safety was and told me how to aim. My target was sitting quietly in the grass on the other side of the road. I was not at all

thrilled about the situation, even knowing that the bird would be eaten, not wasted. But once the sights were up everything changed. Then it was all a matter of technicalities, hold steady, aim, squeeze the trigger – *BANG*. I remember at the time being horrified by how impersonal everything was behind the sights of a gun.

At the *corrida*, my sights were my books.



Illus. 15: A *corrida* in Gijón

On the Saturday of the bullfight, Heidi, Garrett, and I took the train into Gijón, then walked to the bullring. We arrived at 5:30pm. The ring was smaller than I had expected, and perched as we were in the back of the balcony, we still had a good view of the arena. It was a very cheerful scene, the balconies and columns were decorated with swags and ribbons, and as the start of the fight approached, the seats filled with the moving color of the spectators. Apparently the Spanish conception of capacity is much different than in the States. Long after I considered the bleachers to be full, people continued to arrive. The seats were numbered, and each person was allotted about one

square foot of bench to sit on, and although I was lucky enough to be on the end of a row with some foot room, Heidi and Garrett had to sit with the people in the row below them between their legs. They got tired of this pretty quickly and either stood or perched on the back of our section of the bleachers.

The fight began with the traditional opening ceremony. Leading the parade across the arena were the two constables, riding a matched pair of gorgeous Morgans. These men would be responsible for orchestrating the fight. They were followed by the three matadors (or *toreros*), each walking with their dress capes wrapped around their shoulders. The matador's traditional costume is called *un traje de luces*, a suit of lights, so named because the silk fabric of the pants and short jacket is richly embellished with trim (traditionally gold) and sparkles in the sun. At many stages in the bullfight's history, women were either ordered away or else criticized for attending. The main reason, of course, was that delicate women should not harden themselves with the violence at a bullfight. However, in *Death and Money in the Afternoon* one critic notes that "among his other concerns was the immorality of the bullfighters' tight-fitting suits of lights, which 'show their form and incite the women.' " I certainly didn't mind them.

Behind each of the *toreros* came their ring assistants which made up their *cuadrilla*. A *torero's cuadrilla* is composed of three *banderilleros* and two *picadors*. The *banderilleros* also wear suits of light, but with silver trim. It is their job to cape the bull as it comes into the ring to give their *torero* a chance to assess how it moves. They are also each responsible for placing two barbed sticks, called *banderillas*, in the hump of the bull during the fifth act.

Following the *banderilleros* were the *picadors* on their horses. The most distinguishing things about the *picadors*' costumes were their flat hats and their heavily protected right legs. Their horses were large and solid looking, heavily padded on their right side, and wearing leg guards.

The *toreros*' sword boys were not part of the parade, but could be seen shaking out capes and examining swords in the passageway around the outside of the arena. The parade stopped in front of the president's box to ask for the key to open the gates and begin the fight. The president is the master of ceremonies, and it is he who signals the changing acts of each fight and who decides whether a matador will be allowed to cut an ear from the bull he has killed. This is an honor accorded only when the matador has fought particularly well and has put on a brilliant show for the audience. The crowd can show support for a matador by waving a sea of white handkerchiefs at the president. If the president agrees that the matador is to be honored, he displays his own white handkerchief, and one of the constables cuts off the ear for the matador.

The president gave his consent for the fight to start, and each *torero* swung his dress cape up to a friend in the audience, then positioned himself behind the railing of the passageway to await the first bull.

The bull was preceded by a man bearing the bull's name, ranch of origin, and weight on a large sign. A moment later the specified bull burst from the gate and stood in the arena ready to fight. Seeing the first bull made it easy to believe that fighting bulls are as different from livestock as wolves are from domesticated dogs. The phrase 'the bull bursts into the ring looking for something to kill' which I remembered from my reading also seemed apt. The bull was jet black, and somewhere between 1000 and 1100 pounds.

There were no illusions about the danger this animal presented, and for that reason the emotions of the crowd were fully engaged. It was amazing, too, to see the effect the bull had on the matadors and their *cuadrillas*. Although showing no fear is part of their job, it was easy to see that they had plenty of respect for their opponents. Belmonte, a matador acknowledged to be nearly fearless, is quoted in *Gates of Fear* as saying, “If we matadors had to sign the contracts one hour before the *corrida* was to start, there would be no bullfights.”

The *banderilleros* opened the first act by passing the bull several times back and forth in front of the matador whose bull it was. This was a short act, quickly followed by the second act in which the matador showed off his capework, doing standard as well as embellished passes. The idea of each pass was to bring the bull as close to the matador’s motionless body as possible. The ability of the matador to manipulate both the cape and the bull was incredible. Even though it had been mentioned in my books, I was unprepared for the dancer-like grace of the matador. It was very obvious that this man was an athlete in addition to being courageous.

The end of the second act was signaled and the third act began. The *picadors* rode in and took up their positions on opposite sides of the ring. When they were situated, the matador maneuvered the bull into a position directly across from the first horse. With a flick of the wrist, the matador whipped the cape away and the bull got its first good look at the horse. It charged fiercely and the impact was audible. The *picador* leaned his pic into the shoulder muscles of the bull, and after a moment in which each strained against the other, the matador caped the bull away from the horse and prepared it for its second



charge. The cape work which leads the bull away from the horse is considered the fourth act.

The use of horses and the wounding of the bull combine to make the third act the least popular, and aside from the kill, they are aspects which receive the most criticism. The blood from the wounded bull was thick and red against its black coat, and humans it seems are quick to associate blood with pain. There is also the horse to be concerned about. Although thickly padded, the impact is very real, and a fear response in the horse being attacked seems inevitable.

Much to my surprise, I didn't mind the use of the horses as much as I thought I would. In fact, I was extremely impressed by their performance and I don't think my authors did them proper justice. Throughout their ordeal they were unreasonably calm, and aside from some ear twitching and feet shifting they acted as though it were just another normal day, and to some extent I guess it was. When the bull hit them, it usually wasn't at a great speed, and the horses actually leaned into the bull while it was pushing at them. Normal day or not, they left the arena at a brisk trot.

The fifth act was carried by the *banderilleros*. Each *banderillero*, in turn, stood in the center of the ring and called the bull to him. As the bull charged the *banderillero* ran to the side, drawing the bull with his movement. As the two converged, the *banderillero* turned, legs tight together, and rammed the two *banderillas* into the *morillo*, the hump of muscle just forward of the shoulder blades. When placed correctly, these decorated sticks remained stuck in the skin and dangled there, providing brilliant contrast to the dark hide of the bull. Although my authors described this act as virtually danger-free, I was still very impressed.

The sixth act, called the *faena*, is the act in which the reputation of the matador is made. In this act, the matador must prove his skill both in controlling the bull, and in the manipulations of his *muleta*. The *muleta* is a flag-like cloth stiffened along the top with a notched stick, and spread out further with a long sword. Since it is smaller than the cape, the target size is reduced and the matador must be more precise in his movements. Here my authors warned me that an inexperienced eye would be unable to distinguish the artist from the amateur. Although I was not able to grasp the nuances of the passes, I was quickly caught up in the movement of the dancers, the bull bending his body around the matador, the matador standing poised and graceful, calling the bull back to him for yet another pass.

Then the seventh act, the kill. I didn't know it was possible for so many people to be so utterly silent. Nothing must distract the bull or the matador. A last charge, a blur of movement, and the sword was buried to its hilt between the shoulder blades of the bull. For the most part, death was relatively fast and dignified. The bull seemed to slow down, it swayed a little, and then it lay down. At this point, the senior *banderillero* approached and with a quick thrust at the base of the bull's skull, finalized death.

An eternity after the first bull entered the ring it was dragged away by a team of skittish mules. I leaned back in my seat and let out a breath that I must have been holding since the beginning. Heidi asked me if that was it. "No," I replied, "there are five more to go."

By the time the last bull had been dragged from the arena, the last victory lap taken, the last flower thrown, and the last wine skin returned, I was drained. The crowd

disappeared like paint into a drain, leaving bare concrete bleachers and a heavy silence. Seat cushions littered the ring, and the music and magic of the fight faded away. It was over.

I wish I could explain how the bullfight affected me, but I'm still not sure myself. I know that during the event my emotions attached themselves to the emotions of the crowd so that I didn't feel the death or pain of the bull as much as I would have if I had been alone. Dean MacCannell describes this phenomenon in his book, *The Tourist*: "Participation in a cultural production, even at the level of being influenced by it, can carry the individual to the frontiers of his being where his emotions may enter into communion with the emotions of others 'under the influence.' " In addition to being 'under the influence,' my mind was also very much occupied with the elements of style, skill, ceremony, and tradition that my books discussed. All else aside, it was easy to like the bullfighters, their suits of light, the brilliant colors of the crowd, the drums, the music, the white handkerchiefs of the fans, the roses, the old man next to me saying "*¡bueno chico, bueno!*" It all comes back to the Bull though. As Jeff said, "Poor, poor bull."

I know. But . . . I liked everything except the actual pain and death of the bull. Many people would argue that these elements are the main point of the bullfight. However, as a spectator with a very basic knowledge of what was going on, it didn't seem as though they were. The parts of the bullfight that are going to last in my memory are the points I have mentioned before, the color, the sound, the emotion of the crowd, and the performance of the bullfighters and their *cuadrillas*. My impression was not one of cruelty or brutality which are adjectives often used in attacks on the bullfight. I would be more willing to ascribe brutality to boxing as does José Picón in *Death and Money in*

*the Afternoon*: “Can there be anything more savage, or more incomprehensible . . . than two men, two brothers . . . beating each other to a pulp. . . .” I think it is the atmosphere of ceremony and respect that redeems the bullfight. Cruelty implies delight in the pain and suffering of another, and pleasure in death. In a bullfight, the crowd responds most favorably when it is a good death, in other words, a fast death. The bull is cheered, and the bullfighters never belittled their opponents. I don’t know how many people will understand my point of view, and until I understand myself, I have very little ammunition against people who want to tell me that my opinions are wrong.

Since my return, several people have asked me, “Did you like it?” A hesitant “Yes.” Silence. I don’t think I have ever had this much trouble revealing my opinion on a sensitive topic. In eighth grade I was flabbergasted to learn that I was the only one in my class who ‘believed in’ evolution, but I wasn’t at all afraid to let my opinion be known. In ninth grade our misguided teacher thought we were mature enough to have a debate on abortion. Half of the girls cried during the debate. Most of the boys tried hard not to speak. However, I was not troubled with my pro-choice position. Yet telling the world and my friends that I liked the bullfight is difficult, both because I have trouble believing it myself, and because it is hard to explain how I could enjoy myself when my audience has not read what I have read and seen what I have seen.

Even more than abortion, the bullfight seems like an issue where one stance is definitely the popular stance, the stance that means you are a compassionate person. In the first part of July I lent a bullfighting book to Owen, an English major, who later returned it unread saying, “Bullfighting really isn’t my thing.” It was as though I had asked him to read the Anarchist’s Cookbook.

It was very obvious to me that the other members of our program were also aware of the proper attitude to take about a bullfight. I remember Adam saying that the only reason *he* went to a bullfight was to see the men get hurt. As though taking the bull's side in the fight excused him from judgment. I'm guessing that he never actually saw a man get hurt. I did. It was at the second fight I went to, in Albacete. In the fifth act, a bull caught a *banderillero* while he was fleeing to the passageway and threw him up against its wooden barrier. The other *banderilleros* were able to draw the bull away, and he was rushed to the infirmary on their shoulders. In Seville I had a chance to see the bullring's infirmary during a tour, and it looked more like a surgery suite than a first aid station.

Garrett had a different strategy. Throughout the entire fight he took pictures. His preoccupation with his photography meant that he missed a good third of the action, and what he did see was filtered through his camera, in a sense it wasn't real. Having thought about it beforehand I hadn't brought my camera, and I don't have any pictures. Besides, photographs can't convey an event whose appeal is movement.

It is funny, Heidi asked me after the fight if it had made me sad, and I couldn't answer yes. She said that it made *her* sad. And yet, earlier that day she laughed when Garrett threw tinfoil at a dying pigeon that was huddled on the tracks at the train station.

To me, the pigeon was a sadder figure than the bulls, and it disgusted me that Garrett would taunt it in its last moments. The pigeon was going to die on the tracks in a train station, surrounded by a populace which would be glad that another 'rat with wings' was out of the air. Its death was probably going to be slow, and it was easy to see that it was miserable. The main thing is, no-one cared.

The bull on the other hand, died in a state of surprise, confusion, and adrenalin, which probably dulled a good amount of the pain. It was fast and he died fighting and respected by the crowd. I would rather be the bull.

## Chapter 5: My *Rastro*

Without doubt the single most memorable part of my stay in Oviedo was the weekend *rastro*. *Rastro* means something like street market, and the American equivalent would be a combination of a farmer's market, a flea market, and a yard sale. It had everything from fruits and vegetables to furniture and knickknacks. It was spectacular.



**Illus. 16: Everything from fruits and vegetables**



**Illus. 17: To furniture and knickknacks**

At the *rastro* I got to try out my Spanish on people who had no obligation to understand me or return my conversation, but who did anyway and were very nice about it too. I also got to feel like part of the action rather than a spectator or hesitant participant. People bumped into me with the same frequency as they bumped into everyone else. Probably the most surprising though was that I got to feel beautiful.

My first encounter with the market was accidental. I discovered it on my way to the city library where I planned to spend an hour or so in the children's section. It was a quiet morning; I bought a breakfast pastry at a little bakery near the university, and was wandering with my nose in my map trying to turn squiggles into streets. Just as I sensed I was closing in on my goal, I turned a corner and was nearly bowled over by the color and activity of the *rastro*. I spent several very enjoyable hours wandering among the stalls, and long before I was able to tear myself away, the library had closed. It was a cheerful, bustling atmosphere

enlivened by shouts of “¡Gafas!” and “¡Bragas!” (sunglasses and panties). I think I would find it very difficult to buy bras and underwear from an open air stand, but the proprietors must have had



**Illus. 18: Bras and underwear for sale**

enough business to keep them going because they were there every weekend.

The following weekend, I made visiting the market the purpose of my excursion. That morning, for the first time in my life, I was wearing a less-than-knee-length black skirt and was feeling a little self-conscious. To alleviate my fears and cast my whole day in a rosy light, a nice looking man, slightly younger than middle age stopped me and told me I was *guapa* (beautiful). I could have hugged him.



To further brighten my day, I had my first half-way-reasonable conversation with a lady who was selling beach towels. Another lady further on in the market asked me what I thought of the skirt she was trying on. I assured her it was *muy bonita*.

On my way home, I made the mistake of pausing beside an old woman who was selling plums out of a battered



**Illus. 19: A lady selling beach towels**

cardboard box. Taking my pause as a sign of interest, she asked me if I wanted any. To be polite, I asked how much they were, and before she finished telling me she was getting a bag out. To prevent being saddled with more plums than I could handle, I knelt and grabbed the first two my hands touched and said “*solamente dos.*” “¿*Dos kilos?*” “*No no, solamente esta,*” and I held out my two plums. She took them, bagged them, put in three more for good measure, and asked for one Euro. I gave it to her and split. Thank goodness all she had were plums or who knows what else I would have ended up with. I don’t usually care for plums either, which made the situation even more amusing.

After such an exhilarating experience, I was hooked. I spent every Saturday and Sunday down at the market for the remainder of my stay. Within a few weeks I began to recognize faces and stalls, I knew which were regulars and which showed up only one day a week, or one day every few weeks. It began to feel as though the market were my

own secret event. On weekends, I woke up without an alarm, and after a quick breakfast slipped out of the slumbering dormitory and into the largely deserted streets. Down the hill, a right at the round church, three blocks down a second hill, and a final right into an atmosphere of color and noise.

One day was particularly amazing. I had returned to a stall where the week before I had fallen



**Illus. 20: An atmosphere of color and noise**

in love with a long red-flowered skirt. To my delight it was still there. Although a woman usually ran the stall, a man, probably her husband, was presiding. I asked him if I could try the skirt on. He nodded and took down a mirror so I could see myself. It fit! So I paid him and was rearranging my purse when he said something fast in Spanish and pointed at the tank tops which were hanging up. Not quite understanding, I shook my head to show that I didn't want to buy one. He smiled and repeated himself, then took me over to the shirts, searched through them for my size, and smiling he gave it to me and motioned for me to put it in my bag. How splendid gestures like that can make you feel!

I left the market on a little cloud and was floating along when a man stopped me by taking my arm just above the elbow. After an initial phrase that I didn't understand I was able to catch "*¿De dónde eres?*" which means basically where are you from? Or what is your nationality? Completely tongue-tied from surprise I only managed to

stammer out “*soy estudiante*” (I am a student), which in retrospect seems like a rather weak answer. But he smiled, said, “You are very *guapa*,” let go of my arm, and continued past me. My arm felt warm where he had been holding it and my cloud ascended a few inches. Two blocks later a man in a dump truck shouted “¡*Guapa!*” at me as I went by.

These compliments were as unexpected as they were flattering. In the States I very rarely receive attention from



**Illus. 21: A man of splendid gestures**

unknown males, and when I do, I’m never quite sure what the results of their assessment are. Once, at a dance in Virginia, a guy I didn’t know stopped in front of me, looked me up and down, then without a change of expression moved on to the next girl and gave her the same treatment. I remember thinking, “And so what is my score then Mr. Judge, sir?” In Spain, I never felt I was being compared to a man’s ideal woman when he looked at me. It was a very relaxing and lovely feeling. I had no fear of failing an appearance test because there didn’t seem to be a test. There was no sliding scale in Spain, no benchmark, no minimum requirement that I had to meet. I could be myself and feel as though it were enough.

Part of my acceptance of the *guapas* and the stares as complimentary rather than concerning was my understanding of that aspect of Spanish culture as I had interpreted it

in *The Soul of Spain* where Havelock Ellis writes that “to gaze on a woman in Spain is by no means an offensive act; it causes no embarrassment; it is a form of flattery well suited to a dignified, silent, and intense race. . . .” Since the book was written in the early 1900’s I interpreted the vocalizations of the stares as a natural progression which still retained the original intent.

Some of my fellow participants, however, did not share my views. After wandering through the market one day, I stopped in at the internet café to write Jeff and ran into Alisia, my neighbor in the program dormitory. She mentioned that she’d been to the market and I asked her if she’d had fun, fully expecting an affirmative answer. “I don’t know,” she said “it was kind of freaky, this older man called me *guapa* then followed me around, he must have been at least 40, old enough to be my dad.”

I was more than a little resentful that she had called my lovely market ‘freaky’ and curious whether her *guapa* incident was different than mine, or if she was seeing the same thing through different eyes. It is difficult to believe that he followed her in the manner that she suggested. It doesn’t quite fit with what seemed to me to be courteous compliments. On the other hand, I do tend to romanticize my surroundings and interactions, which leaves room for error of judgment. Still, if the compliments were not given innocently, they were received innocently, and I was in no hurry for them to stop.

Alisia’s experience and her admonition not to wander alone were not enough to concern me. I continued to explore the market on weekends, and spent much more money than I had planned on trinkets and gifts for friends at home. My confidence in my ability to communicate was helped greatly by the patience and obvious amusement of the vendors that I spoke with. The sense of being completely comfortable in my own skin,

confident in my appearance, also grew, and I had fun reveling in glances which I never would have received in the States. On one occasion, a man turned to look at me as I passed and ran into the person ahead of him. I felt like I did the first time a passing car splashed me with water in Corvallis: “It’s real! It doesn’t just happen in comic books!” It made me feel warm and bubbly, a little silly too.

As all good things must, my time in Oviedo drew to a close, and I found myself wishing my last week could be spent at the market rather than in class. Although they were probably unaware of it, the vendors and patrons of the market had made me feel welcome in Oviedo, a part of the city itself, and more than a simple visitor. My last weekend at the market was subdued. It was misty and grey, appropriate for a leave-taking. As I was leaving my *rastro* for the last time, a man who I had talked to once before waved and called out a goodbye. It was nice, as though the market was returning my farewells.



**Illus. 22: Bright memories**

*The Streets of Oviedo*

As I was wandering the streets of Oviedo,  
 As I was wandering in Oviedo one day,  
 I spied a street market awash in bright colors  
 Teeming with people lighthearted and gay.

“Search through me, espy me, then try me and buy me”  
 The stalls and their wares seemed to say as I passed.  
 A book here, a shawl there, a necklace, a towel,  
 The next stall I went to was never the last.

“May I try on this *falda* with pretty red flowers?”  
 “Of course” said the man, “here’s a mirror let’s see.”  
 “It looks grand.” “I’ll take it! How much do I owe you?”  
 I left with my skirt and a tank top for free.

“¿Como te llama?” a handsome boy asked me.  
 “*Me llamo es* Taylor and how about you?”  
 The boy named Alonzo had dark hair and brown eyes,  
 Good mannered, quite charming, and no more than two.

“Would you like any fresh plums, any sweet juicy ripe plums?”  
 An old woman asked as I paused by her stand.  
 “Not really, no thank-you, just two then, no more please,”  
 In spite of my cries I got three more than planned.

As I wandered home from the streets of Oviedo  
 Loaded with parcels and lighter than air,  
 I thanked fate, luck, and fortune for Spain and my *Rastro*  
 For giving me memories to treasure and share.



## Chapter 6: The Space of a Lifetime

My motives for going to Spain were mostly what one would expect, a desire to learn a second language and curiosity about living in another culture. However, I also went so that I could live outside the routines of home. I wanted a chance to step back and look at my life; a time for reflection when I would have long enough to fully explore thoughts and ideas as they occurred to me. I also wanted a chance to think about the future; to contemplate the goals which I had been moving towards and assure myself that they were still important to me.

Oviedo was perfect. In addition to having time to think about all the issues I had hoped to address, I was able to relax completely. I had forgotten what it was like to live and think in an atmosphere where my mind could be either centered in the moment or wandering pleasantly. It was lovely to have a mental break from the school year, not to have my mind racing along at breakneck speed trying to get everything done. It was a true vacation for the mind, body, and spirit. In my final Oviedo journal entry I wrote:

It really has been a wonderful two months. I have had time to relax completely (live without stress for over a week), think about things, and enjoy my solitude. It is as though these two months (plus next month of course) have recharged all my batteries, replaced my backups, oiled my parts, and washed the windshield too. I know when I return home I will be able to jump into everything with real enthusiasm and energy. I do want to be careful though. If it takes two months to rejuvenate I should consider what should be done during the normal course of life/work/school/play to bring down the stress level.

Although I have always lived a fast-paced life, I believe the difference in stress levels between Corvallis and Oviedo was accentuated by the events which preceded my trip. In the two short months prior to my departure for Spain I was living in a whirl wind.



Jeff graduated from college, my brother graduated from high school, Jeff and I leased our first apartment, we were married, and I began that long and intimidating process of applying for vet school. This is in addition to the ‘normal’ stresses of college life.

No one can go through all that and emerge unchanged. The girl who wrote a scholarship essay about being the perfect exchange student boarded the plane in tears wondering how she was going to make it through two months without her husband. There was no thought of staying; I just knew at that point that our separation would play a bigger role in my experience than I had expected. When I applied it was a sort of faint shadow in the back of my head. Besides, we weren’t even engaged back then.

Although missing Jeff was a constant aspect of my time in Oviedo, it usually wasn’t bad enough to interfere with my pleasure in the things happening around me. However, I do think it changed the way I engaged in them. In a letter home to Jeff I wrote: “I just adore your letters, they always make me smile, and often laugh out loud, which I don’t do much here. It isn’t because I’m not happy, I’m just a quieter happy.” This feeling was expressed in a second letter as well: “I don’t think that people over here would recognize me if you were around. I would be so happy and so full of light that I’m sure I would look different. I have been really happy here on plenty of occasions, but it is more of an internal happiness than an I-can’t-hold-it-in-I-have-to-shout-it-to-the-world-or-explode happiness.”

There were, of course, occasions when missing Jeff was more than just a slight ache, and in those moments the rest of the world seemed to disappear as I focused inward. On one of these occasions I went downstairs to the main lounge to watch *The Incredibles*, hoping that the movie would take my mind off his absence. I felt very disconnected from



everyone around me – a little sphere of silence and stillness amidst the ebb and flow of conversation and life.

This behavior in me was allowed because, as I had heard people whispering, “She is the girl who was married only a few days before the program started.” This is not to say that other people weren’t missing boyfriends and girlfriends, but people gave our love more credit because we were married. In reality, I would have missed Jeff just as much if we hadn’t been married.

The other, and very unexpected way in which Jeff’s absence affected me was in my dream patterns. I discovered that during very Jeff-sick periods I had exceptionally vivid and unusual dreams. On Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup> I wrote: “I get to see Jeff ‘Day after tomorrow’ and almost ‘tomorrow’ how exciting! It’s a good thing too, because my dreams are positively out of control. Last night there was a pirate whose ship looked like a cross between an octopus and a pumpkin, and an injured cat that was proof that aliens had landed. I wonder what tonight holds in store for me.”

Our reunion was everything the most romantic person could have dreamed of, and together we set off to explore Spain. We spent long hours wandering, people-watching, and just enjoying each other’s company. We also had ample time to talk. It was surprising to discover how many topics related to married life we hadn’t discussed. We spent hours talking over dinner, in true Spanish style, and stayed up late into the night, unwilling to bring our conversation to a close. It was wonderful.

But as all  
wonderful things must, our  
time in Spain drew to a  
close and we returned to  
Corvallis to begin a  
different adventure,  
married life. Spain has  
become a memory, a very  
special type of memory.



**Illus. 23: An evening meal in Segovia**

In my senior year of high school I became very good friends with Christian, a German exchange student, and since graduation I have visited him twice in Europe. Both times he has talked about how his year in the U.S. is like a little sphere of memories that is tucked away in his brain. Not thought of on a daily, or even weekly basis, but a cherished thing nonetheless. I think now that I have been in Spain I understand him a little better. My honeymoon days were shared with Jeff, so together we can examine our memories and reminisce about our time in Granada or Segovia. Our shared memories have life.

My Oviedo memories are different. Since I don't have anyone to remind me of them, they almost feel too far away to touch; a fantastic dream whose feeling is fading although the memory is sharp. It is almost as though my time in Oviedo were a movie I saw some time ago. I remember the setting the most. Steep streets, the *rastro* of course, a soundtrack of vendors, Vespas, and silence. And the main

character . . . she seems so familiar, and yet she is not me. What's more, I don't think I could ever be her again. She was a very still quiet girl who had a rainbow behind her eyes and the playful yet thrilling music of the accordion running in her blood.



**Illus. 24: Playful yet thrilling music**

## Annotated Bibliography

### General Culture

Ellis, Havelock. *The Soul of Spain*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1908.

This book is a basic overview of Spanish culture. It covers a little bit of everything: Art history, Architecture, Travel tips, 'The Spaniard', Religion, Government, Singing, Dancing, Literature, Great Spanish Personalities, Etc.

Hooper, John. *The Spaniards: A Portrait of the New Spain*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1987.

This book covers the period of transition between Franco's dictatorship, and the constitutional monarchy which followed. It also comments on the culture of Spain, on some historical events, and general information pertaining to Spain.

Ross, Christopher. *Contemporary Spain: A Handbook*. London: Arnold, 2002.

In addition to general information about Spain, this book has a small section on each of the Spanish provinces.

### Women and Youth

Enders, Victoria and Pamala Radcliff, eds. *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1999.

Two topics of particular interest that are included are: the role of women in the war against Napoleon, and the role of women (or lack of it) in the San Fermin festival in Pamplona.

Kaplan, Temma. *Taking Back the Streets: Women, Youth, and Direct Democracy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

*Taking Back the Streets* has a chapter about the conditions that women lived under during the Franco regime, as well as about the overall conditions that protesters lived and operated under.

## History: General, The Inquisition, The Spanish Civil War

Coulton, G.C. *The Inquisition*. London: Ernest Benn, 1929.

This book was about the European Inquisition in general, not specifically the Spanish Inquisition. The organization of the Inquisition was described, as well as the way it worked, and the way it got out of hand.

Gibbs, Jack. *The Spanish Civil War*. London: Ernest Benn, 1973.

This book covers all of the main aspects of the Spanish Civil war.

Kamen, Henry. *A Concise History of Spain*. New York: Scribner, 1973.

This book was exactly what it said it was: a concise history.

Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition*. New York: New American Library, 1965.

In addition to information about the Spanish Inquisition, this book includes a chapter in defense of the Spanish Inquisition.

Orwell, George. *Homage to Catalonia*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1952.

This was a wonderful book about the republican front in Catalonia during the Civil War, as experienced by an English volunteer.

Sommerfield, John. *Volunteer in Spain*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1937.

*Volunteer in Spain* is about the Spanish Civil War as seen from the perspective of an Englishman who fought in the international column of the republic. It is a first-hand account of life on the Madrid front, and the passion that brought so many foreigners to Spain to fight.

## Gypsies

Quintana, Bertha B. and Lois Grey Floyd. *¡Qué Gitano! Gypsies of Southern Spain*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1986.

This book is a good source of information on modern gypsy culture, as well as how that culture has adjusted to the modern world where tourists will pay for an 'authentic' gypsy experience. Most often this experience is through the art of flamenco. There was also a wonderful chapter on the Gypsies' view of American culture.

## Bullfighting

Conrad, Barnaby. *La Feista Brava: The Art of the Bullring*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953.

*La Fiesta Brava* is a wonderful introduction to the bullfight, covering everything from the breeding of the bulls to the customs surrounding the retirement of a matador.

Conrad, Barnaby. *Gates of Fear*. New York: Crowell, 1957.

This book was divided into chapters each of which was devoted to a single famous bullfighter.

Collins, Larry and Dominique Lapierre. *Or I'll Dress You in Mourning*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968.

This was a very well written book about the life and times of one very famous bullfighter, El Cordobés, who grew up in Andalucía during the Spanish Civil War.

Shubert, Adrian. *Death and Money in the Afternoon: A History of the Spanish Bullfight*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

*Death and Money in the Afternoon* is an in-depth examination of the bullfight from a socio-political standpoint. It covers the conflict that has surrounded the bullfight from its inception.

## Food and Drink

Timelife Books and Peter S. Feiblemen. *Foods of the World: The Cooking of Spain and Portugal*. New York: Timelife Books, 1969.

In addition to providing recipes for some of the better known dishes of Spain and Portugal, the author describes regional staples and specialties.

Timelife Books and Alec Waugh. *Foods of the World: Wines and Spirits*. New York: Timelife Books, 1968.

This book had a chapter on sherry which was particularly interesting because it described the process of making sherry in addition to the different varieties which are available.

## Literature

Cervantes, Miguel De. *Don Quixote*. Trans. Edith Grossman. New York: HarperCollins, 2003.

## Travel

Douglas, Norman. *Experiments*. London: Chapman & Hall, 1926.

The first essay in *Experiments* is on travel writing and the right and wrong way to go about it.

Hemingway, Ernest. *The Sun Also Rises*. New York: Scribner, 1926.

*The Sun Also Rises* is a travel work set in Pamplona during the annual festival of San Fermin.

MacCannell, Dean. *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. New York: Schocken Books, 1976.

Two chapters on what it is to be a tourist, and how an experience or the quest for an experience can be shaped by being a tourist.