ONE CITY, NINETEEN GUVNORS
GRANGE STRATHMORE THEATRE

ONE CITY, NINETEEN GUVNORS

presented by:
THE LONDON REVIEW
In association with:
THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

The London Review Company: (In Alphabetical Order)

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PROLOGUE:

One City, Nineteen Guvnors details our collective experience abroad. We’d like to tip our hats to our muse, the West End comedy One Man, Two Guvnors, a truly British production that taught us the idiosyncracies of English culture and inspired us to embrace England with open arms.

London is known for its highly acclaimed theatre. For us, our trip to London had all the magic you would expect of a perfectly tailored theatre production. From the beautiful but untouchable green grass of Oxford to the flirtatious Albanian scarf-man in Picadilly Circus, and all the other exciting events that befell us—we truly felt like we were living out a play of our own.

This book will take you on a journey through the drama, the comedy, and the adventure that was our London production.

So please silence your cell-phones, and no flash-photography. The curtain is now rising. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the show!

SCENES:

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(Full list of articles in the back)
Big Ben is 316 feet tall.

Britain was not always an island. In a moment of hare-brained desperation, King Edmund the Magnificent ordered the flooding of the Great English Isthmus in 944. While this did prevent the massive Gallic army from marching into his land, the monarch inadvertently created the English Channel and consequently, his very own island nation.

Line dancing was originally created by the American Revolutionaries to mock the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace. How ‘bout that?

The famed English “chunnel” was initially the largest tea smuggling operation in Europe. It is estimated that 80 million pounds of Lady Grey were smuggled between 1800 and 1873. After laying dormant for more than a century, the undersea tunnel was rediscovered and repurposed for public transportation in 1994.

Top Withens (the Wuthering Heights house) was recently sold for 1.5 million pounds. The buyer promptly converted it into an elaborate bachelor pad.

Daniel Radcliffe, lead character of the Harry Potter series, was initially slated for a nude scene in the sixth film. However, producers scrapped the idea due to the actor’s “unsightly disrobed appearance.”

A long and wide road leads to the front of Buckingham Palace. Now simply known as the Mall, this famous red path had a covert purpose in the turbulent, war-stricken 20th century. At a moment’s notice, a small prop plane built for two could be summoned from palace storage—the Mall’s generous length and straightness acting as its runway for take off. Rumor stands that even today, Queen Elizabeth could still fly away from imminent danger with the simple utterance, “Ready the prop!”

The Queen is 5 feet 4 inches tall in her nude feet—2 feet 6 if you halve it, incidentally the same average height of a standing male platypus.

The saying “The sun never sets on the British Empire” still holds partially true—the sun only sets for about 5 hours each day between its distal territories of the Pitcairn Islands and the British Indian Ocean holdings.

Following Winston Churchill’s promotion to Prime Minister, transport officials had to double-bind the zipline running from the Big Ben clock tower to Westminster Abbey... to accommodate his impressive girth.

Until its conversion in the early 1970s, the Battersea Power Station used to be a gargantuan manufacturing plant for British candies and chocolate, known as the Wilmington Confectionary. It was the inspiration behind Roald Dahl's 1964 classic Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

The Houses of Parliament are so named because they actually consist of eleven houses stored inside the Palace of Westminster. Upon initial construction, there was some debate as to whether the structures were technically houses or cottages.

Bears are extinct in Britain because bear baiting was such a popular sport in the 1500s. In perpetual commemoration of the loss, the British Royal Guardsmen wear tall and iconic bear fur hats.

While the Buckingham Palace Guards are not allowed to smile, they are allowed to break wind—but only on the hour.

...Who Would’ve Thought?
About 200 feet east of the Cannon Street Tube Station, across the road between two traffic signals behind a small, knee-high ornate iron grille and currently just in front of a cardboard candy-bar advertisement lies a chunk of rock, roughly the size of an old television set, that supposedly keeps the city of London in one piece. At least, that’s how one story goes. Another story holds that this rock once marked the center of Londinium, the Roman town that became London and was used as a milliaram from which distances out of the city were measured. And, of course, another story claims the rock was part of ancient Druidic rites. There’s a different tale for every London guidebook printed, including the fact that Shakespeare name-dropped it in *Henry VI*. It’s a hardy little rock, having survived several moves as well as the Blitz bombing in WWII. Until the city installed a protective sheet of plexiglass, passersby could even touch it through the grille if they happened to notice it at all as they walk down Cannon Street. Though whatever its origins, the London Stone serves as just one of many little historical Easter eggs for a London visitor to hunt down.

Another little hidden gem of London is the Dennis Severs house, an art installation tucked rather innocuously in the midst of towering office buildings just a couple of blocks from Exchange Square and the Liverpool Street Tube. If you’re very quiet and well-behaved (and have £7 on hand), a nice man will let you inside to take a self-guided tour of this 18th-century home. Somewhere between a living-history museum and a 3-D still life, walking through each room of this house is like stepping into a series of old paintings. To enhance the sense of time travel, each room has its own sights, smells, and sounds: from the toasty basement kitchen with a glowing coal hearth smelling of baked bread and sage with the sounds of horse-drawn carriages clip-clopping past to the chilly, musty attic rooms with desperation-empty coal grates, hanging tatters of laundry, withered clove-orange pomanders, and the sounds of creaking boards and quick-hushed conversations. “If these walls could talk,” the saying goes—but these walls do talk. By the time you’ve wandered through the rest of the house, you’ll understand the artist’s purpose and tears might spring to your eyes when you see the pallet of rags next to the drafty fireplace in the root cellar because you can practically envision the little orphan servant who spends his nights there. Stepping back over the threshold into the bright light of day and blaring truck horns on Follgate Street will never feel more like returning from another world.

Lastly, if you want to go really far back in time, you can visit one of the oldest little Easter eggs in London at the Guildhall Art Gallery. As you walk across the courtyard, you’ll notice a curved line of pavers. This marks out the original line of a Roman amphitheater, excavated and preserved eight meters below your feet, which can be found down a couple flights of stairs in the sub-basement of the gallery. Bordered within black support walls and track lighting, the limestone boulders and crushed gravel look like a hastily built movie set, but they’re entirely real. It’s very quiet, down among the ruins, but you can try to imagine the crowd’s roar, the smell of animals and human bodies, the heat of a summer sun. Walking back up the stairs and through the gallery, you gradually make your way past paintings from the 18th-to-20th centuries and toward the front entrance, a slightly less jarring return to present tense.
Many American chains have expanded across the globe, so it was unsurprising to see so-called American staples such as McDonald’s and Starbucks during my time in London. It was slightly more surprising to see fast food restaurants such as KFC and Burger King. I found it interesting that Whole Foods has expanded internationally, but none of these places were the most noteworthy American expansion to me.

While walking around London, especially in the major shopping district between Oxford Circus and Piccadilly Circus, I began to see a familiar sight that I didn’t expect to see when I headed across the pond. As people passed me with the recognizable pink striped bags in hand, I knew we were close to a Victoria’s Secret store. While I knew that clothing stores like H&M were popular internationally, I wasn’t expecting to see Victoria’s Secret while abroad. But when I did, it was practically my duty as an intern for Victoria’s Secret PINK to go check out the flagship London Victoria’s Secret store (located at 111 New Bond Street) before I left.

I’m not usually that interested in architecture. I’m definitely not the kind of person who thinks stores are pretty, but I can honestly say that it was absolutely breathtaking. The London flagship store was different from the traditional Victoria’s Secret store. The store used a lot more black than American Victoria’s Secret stores, and there was also a much higher use of Angel-related décor. An impressive mirrored staircase and glass chandeliers adorned the store. Wings worn by Victoria’s Secret Angels in past fashion shows perfectly accented the store’s décor.

The store was huge. At 40,386 square feet, the store spanned four levels. The entire bottom floor is devoted to PINK merchandise and is decorated more like a traditional PINK store, with flirty décor that was taken to a classier, more elevated level. The top floor, however, is an exclusive VIP section, with private Angel suites for the rich and famous to shop and try on clothes with the assistance of a personal shopper.

The flagship store is the larger of the two Victoria’s Secret stores in London, and it’s the only store that carries PINK merchandise. The flagship store has only been open since August 29, 2012, but it has practically become a tourist attraction, according to one of the store employees.

The store employees were incredibly interested in my experience as an intern for PINK, and they shared a lot of their ideas with me. As someone with an interest in international marketing, it was interesting to see what ideas they thought could work in the U.K. For example, they thought it would be a good idea to do clothing lines for London’s colleges (or “unis”) or for European football (soccer) teams. We have similar clothing lines in the U.S., with the PINK Collegiate Collection and the NFL and MLB lines, so perhaps expanding these concepts to the U.K. would be successful.

Regardless of the potential for international growth, it was incredibly interesting for me to get to see the Victoria’s Secret flagship store in London. I loved getting to talk to people who worked in the store, and it was fascinating to see the differences and similarities between the London store and stores in the United States.
The Pigeons of London

coming to a theater near you

a new sequel to

Alfred Hitchcock’s “The Birds”
NEED SOUVENIRS?

COME TO CAMDEN TOWN

FOR THE LOWEST PRICES IN LONDON

Take the legendary London Tube straight to the Camden station and enjoy the cheapest gifts and wildest market in town.
Camden Town Wears London’s Crown
Sida Niu

If you asked anyone in this year’s London Review group, you would soon learn that I absolutely love Camden Town. I find the chaotic atmosphere of crowded small street markets amazingly exciting and the back-and-forth dialogue of haggling adrenalizing. When I stepped out of the Camden Town tube station into what seemed like a never-ending road of bargains, I knew I would be coming back.

I was impressed by the diversity of goods offered at the market. The stalls in the market offered everything from household goods, handmade decorative culturally-inspired items, vintage goods, and 20th century antiques to clothing, goods and art from subcultures – including goth, alternative, and modern designers. Perhaps more impressive is the history of the Camden Market. While walking through the market, I took advantage of my conversation with the locals and learned about the history of one of my favorite sections of Camden Town: the Stables Market. The Stables Market was once the historic Pickfords stable, Pickfords being one of the UK’s oldest functioning companies that focused on moving and storage. In addition, part of the market is also a former horse hospital that served horses pulling the Pickford’s barges along the canal, which would explain all the omnipresent horse statues and engravings found throughout the market! The horse statues provided phenomenal picture opportunities, and Brandon and I wasted no time climbing clumsily up on the metal horse statues for a few legendary tourist pictures.

But it gets better. Not only do they sell goods at Camden Market, they sell food, too! As we approached the Regent’s Canal that ran through Camden Market, my nose picked up on the scent of a feast fit for kings. I begin to salivate as additional olfactory sensors in my nose started to spiral out of control with the increasingly potent delicious aroma. Each additional step became faster than the previous, and I was at a full out run by the time I reached the sea of food stands sparkling before me with names of various countries proudly displayed above them. Italian? Chinese? Thai? Brazilian? Greek? Heck, I wanted it all! But alas, I decided on the Mexican food stand that boasted a burrito that would make a Chipotle burrito look like its runt baby cousin. That meal inspired a new mission: to come back to Camden Town and try every one of its food stands.

While I did not end up keeping that promise to myself, I did return to Camden Town twice more during my time in London. I was continually impressed by the food and bargains I enjoyed while I browsed through the market. The diversity of goods featured at the market is a subtle reminder of the diverse culture of people living in London. Each time we ventured out of our hotel, we were consistently greeted and welcomed by people of every ethnicity. This is one of the many reasons why I loved London – it was the biggest melting pot I have been a part of.
One thing I noticed in London is that they had super awesome bookstores.

The first one I discovered was when my parents and I were exploring the neighborhood around our hotel. The bookstore’s name was Slightly Foxed. We found this bookstore, but it was closed, and every time we went by it seemed to be closed. But finally we found it was open one day. We went inside, and it was so cute. It looked kind of small from the outside, but then once you went in, you realized that there is a bigger basement floor. It also had a selection of unusual titles, like there weren't really common English books I saw at other bookstores later, but they seemed to have books I didn't see anywhere else. But later I figured out they were really good books. Another cool thing about Slightly Foxed was that it has its own publishing company. It publishes a journal and books. It was kind of cool to see Slightly Foxed Children's Guide when I was in their bookstore!

The next bookstore we went to was called Daunt. It was something of an adventure going to Daunt because we got lost for a long time and finally found it, but it still was an adventure! We almost gave up finding it! They had a huge kid’s section, which made me happy. I found a book there that was so great (and for a great price) that I was so happy that a clerk had to come over and ask if I was all right! This book was part of a series that I love, but I did not know about this book, so I was surprised and excited to see it. They also had great service. The people working there were really nice and helped me to look for another book in the same series. This store specializes in travel books, but they sell all kinds. We bought enough books that they gave us a canvas bag with a drawing of the store on it.

Waterstone’s was the next bookstore we went to, which was in Oxford. I loved it because it had an entire floor just for kid’s books of all different ages! It was pretty big—it had five floors! I found the book I had been looking for at Daunt, so I was happy that we went into Waterstone’s. And the book was even discounted!

The next bookstore we went to was Blackwell’s, which was also in Oxford. It was really cool because it has such a thick history, which we learned a lot about on the last tour of the store until next winter! The fact that they went from a little itty bitty space—about the size of my bedroom—to the humongous space it is today is pretty amazing! The downstairs space is the largest room selling books in all of Europe.

While I visited many places and saw many cool things while I was in London, the bookstores were a highlight because I found so many cool new things to read that I can keep for a long time. Books aren't like candy because they can be read over and over again. And one piece of candy can only be eaten once. Plus I love books and they bring awesome cool new stories into my life. So, for me, London will always be connected to books and reading and bookstores.
On Broad Street, Oxford, there stands a 134 year-old bookstore known as Blackwell's. From the outside, the bookstore looks small but once I stepped inside, I realized that the bookstore was huge. The basement, known as the Norrington Room, was opened in 1966 and extends under part of Trinity College. Its shelves spans three miles and, at 10,000 square feet, is practically an entry in the Guinness Book of Records as the largest single room in which books are sold.

I did a historic tour of Blackwell’s and went to Sir Basil Blackwell’s Edwardian style office. I saw the very first bookcase that was fitted in the bookshop, which was dated January 1st, 1879. Sir Basil, also known as the Gaffer, had a neat office. His family preserved the room, so it looks just like it did when he was around. The career of many writers, such as J.R.R. Tolkien and Dorothy Sayer began in that office. Copies of publications that he commissioned are still available for visitors to review. Sir Basil was the first bookseller to be knighted by the Queen for his service to the people.

I spent two hours (and £££) at Blackwell’s, looking through the large selection of books and enjoying the atmosphere. It is currently still in the hands of the Blackwell family and has over 60 retail outlets across the United Kingdom.
“Yeah, we’ve got cool stuff.”

Need a £12,000 gold-plated, diamond encrusted iPhone 5?

Need the hottest new children’s book that is sure to blow the judges away?

Got £189,000 lying around that you’d like to spend on an 18 carat rose gold iPhone 5 case, encrusted with rare pink and white diamonds, adorned with 12 carat black, white, and pink diamonds, accented with mother of pearl inlays, all accompanied by a leather clutch with Croc and Ostrich skin leather lining adorned with rose gold charms, and sitting in a wooden box made of 3 rare oaks?

Need to add to your Harry Potter wand collection by adding EVERY wand?

Need an LG OLED television that’s only 4mm thin?

WE’VE GOT IT!!!

Everything but the kitchen sink. Wait, I think we have those too...
The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines pub as “an establishment where alcoholic beverages are sold and consumed.” The pub is so much more than this, however. A pub is a place where one can unwind from the day, make friends, and talk about anything from politics to religion, all while having a nice stout.

The British have been drinking beers since the Bronze Age, but it was the coming of the Romans and the making of their road network in which the first inns called tabernae, a place where the traveler could find these refreshments, first appeared. The Anglo-Saxons established alehouses that grew out of home dwellings, and these alehouses formed meeting places for the villagers to rendezvous and talk about issues. Therein lies the starting history of the modern pub.

To me the pub is a fascinating phenomenon. Drinking contains such negative connotations in the States, that the far and few pubs we have are often lowly populated or visited only late at night. The pub is a place where one can assemble with others and enjoy a breaking of bread if you will, only with a nice stout.

On the trip a few of us did a pubcrawl, which took us not really to pubs but to bars on Piccadilly Circus. It didn’t feel like I was in London anymore, just on a binge drinking brigade with tourists. I enjoyed myself thoroughly, yes, but I missed the communal place that I have come to identify as a pub. The pub: a place where one can relax and just talk about anything, from football (soccer) to literature to one’s place in life. It’s a place where most conversation isn’t taboo, perhaps more relaxed from the alcohol.

Pubs have been a breeding-ground for intellectual thought; on one of the first days in London a group of us went to a pub where Marx used to write. We mused about what he had to drink as he spouted off his manifestos. In Oxford we dined at a pub where J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis used to write. It was incredible to just be surrounded by so much history as ambiance. In the states we take history for granted because we are such a young country. Here, however, history is rich, it’s everywhere. This could be a reason for the dubious nature of drinking in the United States—here in England it’s just another part of the scenery, part of the history.

A wise professor once told me that I tend to overanalyze everything. This is probably true, but maybe I’m just analyzing here. Anyhow, I think the pub holds an atmosphere unlike any other. The meaning and connotations behind the word pub hold true of the same definitions of friendship, knowledge, creativity, and amusement. The pub is so much more than an establishment that sells alcohol. It needs the beverage to carry its meaning, but therein lies adventure, discovery.
Crawling around with the group on Friday night struggling to find a place to eat, an impulsive decision to follow Cameron (“Brass Tacks”) to Chinatown resulted in possibly the best meal of the week. After musing at the first Asian restaurant we stumbled upon—a Korean place with a promising menu—we decided to look for a little while longer and settled for a modern looking place called Red Hot. And was it ever red hot!

I wasn't expecting authentic or even good Chinese food from a clean looking restaurant named Red Hot (it reminded me too much of the name of a Chinese restaurant near my home in St. Louis—the Hot Wok Cafe), but stepping into the place we noticed there were only Asians inside which was definitely a good sign. We were seated quickly in a corner spot near the door and ordered three dishes—a pork dish in red broth, Sichuan-style green beans, and a marinated duck dish. On the menu, the spicy pork dish had four red chili peppers next to it indicating just how spicy it was. We ordered a big bowl of rice because if we didn't, I'm not sure we would have survived.

The spicy pork dish had a hot-pot style broth with all kinds of vegetables cooked into it. By spicy, I mean this dish was glowing hot. I navigated my chopsticks through the opaque red broth, picking out the pork and vegetables and placing them in my rice bowl, trying to mix the ingredients into the rice. This alleviated things a bit, but I tell you the two slurping, sweaty foreigners in the corner of the room must have been a sight to behold!

The next dish to come out was the Sichuan-style green beans, which were similar to your standard Chinese-style green beans but with a twist—Sichuan peppers, also known as prickly ash peppers. These little peppercorns were mean. From what I can recall in Chinese class, there is actually a completely separate flavor category dedicated to the Sichuan peppers. They’re spicy, but it’s a completely different kind of spice than hot. It’s like someone clamped your tongue and sent electricity straight through it—equal parts numbness and prickliness.

Finally, the marinated duck dish came out. It was a bit sweeter than I expected, but the meat was tender and the flavor was a relief compared to the spiciness of the last two dishes—a nice counter-balance. By the time the duck was served, I had to take a break as I had eaten so much already, but it was worth catching my second wind for the duck.

When we had finished, I got to use my Watching the English pub etiquette that Meaghan had wanted to test out. I looked over at the worker (probably one of the chefs but also the guy who served us our dishes) without waving or gesturing. He eventually made eye contact with me and within a minute, brought the check over. I had accomplished a British culture goal. More importantly, the meal itself felt like an accomplishment. This was one of the most challenging (both then and later!) yet delicious meals I’ve ever had which made it all the more rewarding.
Pret a Manger is a U.K.-based fast food chain that prides itself on using the highest quality ingredients possible to create handmade, healthy, natural food. It differentiates itself from its competitors by avoiding preservatives and other food additives and making all of the food fresh every day. Further, they apply sustainable practices to all of their operations, from packaging to food sourcing to waste disposal. At the end of the day, all Pret a Manger stores donate any leftover food to local charities. This emphasis on health and sustainability is perhaps the company’s biggest defining feature.

There couldn’t be a better description of the chain’s other defining feature than its name, which means “Ready to Eat.” When you walk in the door, all of the food there (from sandwiches and salads to soups and desserts) is quite literally ready to eat, making it a perfect stop for the busy Londoner.

Pret a Manger’s fresh, healthy food that’s quick, relatively inexpensive, and can be eaten on-the-go also makes it an ideal stop for the busy London Review participant. In fact, the food was better tasting (and cheaper) than similar “ready-to-eat” options available to us on KU’s campus.

We soon discovered that Pret a Manger stores were all over the city. The more than 240 locations in the U.K. ranged in size, but by the end of the trip, they were a familiar location for us. When we were running around from museums to markets to shows, Pret a Manger (or simply “Pret,” as we affectionately called it) served many functions far beyond simple eating. We used various Pret locations as landmarks to describe where we were. Pret functioned as a good meeting place and an even better place to rest our feet.

One thing that made Pret a Manger an even more perfect location for us was the two little words that grabbed our attention quicker than pretty much everything else on the trip (except KU basketball maybe): free Wi-Fi. With as much fun as we were having and as busy as we were, it was still nice to be able to connect to the Internet to communicate with people back in America (or to figure out where we were supposed to be going, as it often turned out).

So Pret truly has it all: inexpensive, yet tasty food; bathrooms; a place to sit; and free Wi-Fi. Besides the fact that it served every purpose we needed it to, the idea behind Pret a Manger is a smart restaurant concept that is unlike anything in the United States (other than the Pret a Manger locations that have been popping up exponentially in New York City, Washington D.C., Chicago, and Boston since 2000).

In America, the only food that’s inexpensive and quick comes from more traditional fast food restaurants, like McDonald’s or Burger King. Food that’s healthy, made from natural ingredients, and is sold at a reasonable price is nowhere near as quick or accessible as it is in Europe. Perhaps we Americans are too stuck in our fast food habits for this restaurant concept to catch on and become widespread in the U.S., but the combination of natural, inexpensive, quick food (and free Wi-Fi) appealed to us while we were in London.
I’m from the tri-state area. Even though I claim New York City as my own by extension, I’m quite certain it wouldn’t claim me. But I love my city, and have carefully watched its fractures fuse together after September 11th, so fascinated that I eventually wrote my English thesis on 9/11 literature. In the jumble of book suggestions from my professors, Ian McEwan’s *Saturday* was a popular pick. Set in London, McEwan’s microscopic examination of a family illuminated the larger cultural experience of living in a post-9/11 world. The novel is especially prescient as it was written prior to 7/7 but almost perfectly captured the troubled relationship between hyper-modernized, rational and intellectual metropolitan London (much like New York) and fervent, idealistic, and religiously motivated fundamentalist terrorism.

Londoners recognized the danger of living in a post-9/11 major Western city, but after four years and a successful Olympic bid, the post-global-terrorism haze seemed to lift by the summer of 2005. Then, after the tube bombings in Bloomsbury of July 7th, 2005, colloquially referred to as 7/7, McEwan noted in his article, published in major London newspapers and the *New York Times* that London had been, “savagely woken from a pleasant dream”. McEwan asks, “how could we have forgotten that this was always going to happen?”

The key difference between New York and London is McEwan’s use of “forgotten.” New York, since entering modernity, had been an entirely impenetrable city as considered by both its residents and fellow Americans. New York was NEW YORK— all brash and bravado too thick to pierce, to strong to bend, until jet engines twisted metal and mental psyches. New York was shaken to its core, and ever so slowly moved toward recovery. New York builds a Freedom Tower and promises to be stronger than ever, impenetrable once more. New York dares, as it always has, for those to challenge it once again.

London knows better. London has experience. Wandering through the Winston Churchill War Rooms, an underground bunker in Whitehall near 10 Downing Street, I was forced to recognize that London had been a siege city in recent memory, which was a thoroughly foreign concept to accept. Can we, as Americans, even imagine having our political leader, the active head of government, direct from an underground bunker? Can we conceive of continual pummeling of our most prominent city by an outside force? Londoners can because they have. It’s a historical truth. McEwan quietly chides his fellow Londoners for their naivete, as if it was ever an option to live in such a city without not only the threat of destruction, but the realization of that threat.

Why are these cities worth destroying, at least to a fundamentalist? These modern metropolises are temples to plurality. London is the most diverse city on the planet. New York grips Ellis Island tightly, expounding on its history as an immigrant haven of sorts. Every block offers new languages, new religions, new clothes, new gestures, new purpose. Even with over eight hundred years of history, London is in a constant state of renovation and repurposing, just as New York always is. These cities are dynamic, they openly embrace change, hybridity, and evolution in a way that so deeply frustrates the uncompromising clarity of fundamentalism. London and New York are just as fuzzy as the haze that blankets them.
BAD LUCK?
TRY PIMM'S

ROYAL FLUSH
Four years ago, I would have never imagined myself as a politicking white woman, but I have grown exceptionally fond of the idea of democracy and the power of methodical decision-making associated with elected officials. I hadn't planned out much for this trip to London, but one thing was for certain, I needed to observe Parliament.

Just two weeks prior, I was spending a week in Washington D.C. directly following the Sequester. This was my first trip to Capital Hill and I was anxious to see how my minimal knowledge of government could translate into this experience. For the extreme nature of government spending cuts as enacted by the Sequester, I was rather disheartened at the lack of buzz over the topic. As I sat in on a House of Representatives meeting, I was quick to be taken aback by the nonexistence of formality. Votes were being cast and small talk filled the room, but not a single soul was interested in firm, direct and effective debate on the topic.

This seemed to be a rather interesting scenario for a government running a powerhouse like the United States of America.

I took this experience and I evaluated it. I thought long and hard about how quickly decisions were made in our own government and tried to best understand the other hours of the day that were not given to seeing both viewpoints surrounding an argument. It was with my utmost excitement that I would be able to compare Parliament and U.S. government just weeks from each other, and perhaps the negative connotation I had created in my mind could be molded into a different perspective.

During my excursion to Parliament, I found many items that I appreciated about their governing body. The rich history of both their House of Commons and House of Lords, the formal structure of their meetings, and their vocal opposition in debate were a few things that sparked my interest. I was also very intrigued by the concept of questions from the public, where anyone was able to enter the House of Lords or Commons and direct questions to the elected body. There were things I didn't appreciate, though, as say the musty smells and narrow stairwells.

So much history lies within the walls of this landmark, and one could imagine that the procedures would be lacking the modern touch that they need to effectively serve their constituents, but I was incorrect. I had created stereotypes for these similar but yet so different governing bodies. I had placed the US government on some high and all-knowing pedestal before understanding the processes. I had diminished the quality of Parliament because it had been around for a gazillion years.

Then I thought about how all of this correlates to my life, and why I was so particularly fond of Parliament over our own government. It was clear to establish that I appreciate formal meetings with formal procedures, tradition and openness for discussion and debate. Perhaps this translates into my own experiences that I have had on the miniscule scale of Student Senate. These are the ideas that have molded me to believe what a government should be, and the idea of anything other than that is just flat out wrong. This experience gave me an opportunity to evaluate not only these powerhouse systems that determine the fate of two countries but the experience to further understand what I appreciate about democracy.

Hannah Bolton
A Morning Stroll Through Hyde Park
Alaine Caudle

Rain, rain, go away, come again another day. That was my daily chant throughout our week in London. Unfortunately, on most days my wishes didn't come true and the cold and rain persisted. But on Thursday morning, a bit of sunshine peeked through the clouds and I set out for a stroll in Hyde Park.

I started my walk on the western edge, in what is actually known as Kensington Gardens. On the way to my first stop, Kensington Palace, common sights were: cute babies in strollers being pushed by their athletic looking mothers, furiously peddling bicyclists, and adorable old couples with the gleam of a forty-year-old love in their eyes. So pretty typical stuff I'd say. Upon arrival at Kensington Palace, I took a moment to gaze upon it in wonder. As I stood there, I contemplated which part of the palace William and Kate would be living in, and whether it was really a suitable home to raise a child. I soon decided it didn't really matter what part they were living in because it's all still a palace. And yes, indeed, it would be an excellent place to raise a child, but only if the child could be me. Unfortunately I won't be getting the chance to live in Kensington Palace, but I was okay settling with my brief daydream as I stood in the rare London sunshine.

I departed from Kensington Palace and headed east hoping to come across something even better than the thought of living in a royal residence. What I saw next brought me great joy. But it was mostly because I'm a huge dog lover, and it involved cute puppies. Across the way, I saw three pleasantly plump dachshund pups or “sausage dogs” as they're so affectionately called in the UK. These three bundles of fur were bounding through the picturesque patches of green grass without a care in the world. One, whose name I overheard to be “Tim,” was particularly rambunctious, and he took quite a liking to rolling around in the grass and yapping sweet nothings at me from across the sidewalk. Tim and his two amigos weren't the only handsome hounds I saw in the park that day, and as I walked farther I saw a massive Irish Wolfhound. Now I don't know if you've ever heard of the Irish Wolfhound, but they're known for their enormous size. This one in particular likely stood over three feet tall, which, in dog feet, is really tall. If he had stood on his hind legs, he would have probably been over six feet tall, a monster by any standards.

As wonderful as it was, seeing dogs in a park isn't particularly an exclusively British experience. So I continued down the sidewalk, enjoying the crisp breeze on my cheeks and every bit of the beautifully landscaped lawns. My intention all along had been to start at Kensington Palace, as I did, and then make my way to the Queen Elizabeth Gate at the east end of the park. This gate had caught my eye as our bus to Oxford whizzed by the morning prior. I immediately knew I had to go back and see it up close, because the image it contained was something that everyone should come to know and love. What was this remarkable image, you ask? Well, I'll tell you. The image I beheld was the figure of one of the most majestic creatures to ever (probably) exist – the unicorn. I don't know if the city of London is known for anything in particular, like Philadelphia is known for Brotherly Love, but if I had to declare it anything, I'd call it the City of Unicorns and Dreams. I've never seen a city with such an appreciation of unicorns. They were on buildings, in museums, cast in gold, and even struck on £1 coins. I also noticed that each unicorn was usually accompanied by a lion, in an obvious crest-like layout. Curious as to what this symbol meant, I did a little research and found that the lions and unicorns I was seeing all over the city were actually symbols for the Royal Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom. The lion represents England while the unicorn represents Scotland. Naturally that means that I'm now a huge fan of Scotland. I mean, any country that prides itself on being represented by a powerful and prestigious white gleaming unicorn deserves respect in my book. And on Easter I even overheard a relative explaining that our family had ancestor from Scotland, so now I have even more reason to respect the Scots. Plus, unicorns are just cool.

My walk through Hyde Park turned out to be pretty amazing. I saw a palace, some cute dogs, a sweet old couple, a massive Irish Wolfhound, and a beautiful gate with the gigantic figure of a unicorn on it. It was worth the sore feet and grumbling stomach because my memories of Hyde Park will last me a lifetime. And I got some really good pictures of unicorns in case I ever do forget.
London: The City of Unicorns and Dreams

Look at this one.

And here's one sewn into a really old rug.
London: The City of Unicorns and Dreams

Look at this one.

And here's one sewn into a really old rug.

This one was spotted just outside of the Tower of London.

And a gold one on a gate to Kensington Palace.

And this guy just likes to hang out with his lion friend at the east end of Hyde Park.

Come See Them All In Sunny London!
It’s day four of our adventures in London and I decided to venture out on my own for a day of sighting seeing and educational museum visits. To my initial annoyance I realized at my early breakfast that nothing I had planned for the day opened until 10am and I had finished eating breakfast promptly at 8:30. I was so eager to start the day and accomplish all that I had missed in my first three days in London that I forgot to check the museum hours. So instead of following my heart and returning to bed until a more decent hour, I followed my gut and wandered off into the abyss of our neighborhood Kensington in the opposite direction of everything else we had done so far.

After passing numerous quaint shops and homes that lined the Kensington streets, I found myself across from a large walled park. There were joggers, bicyclists, walkers, people of all ages, and of course what drew me in was the plethora of dogs. Dogs of all shapes, sizes, ages, and breeds roamed the rolling fields of green.

The more I wandered around the park the more I realized the dogs all seemed to look like their owners. No matter how cliché it may sound, the beginning of the animated Disney movie 101 Dalmatians which shows dogs and their look-a-like-owners walking in a London park, is stunningly accurate. I was overwhelmed by the calming effect that my walk through the park had over me; from the large beautiful flowing green space to the ponds covered with animals including the majestic swans. While I watched the swans from a nearby bench I watched a little girl with her parents and grandparents as she fed the ducks and even the occasional swan that wandered up to her. Watching the sheer delight that danced across her face as a swan came up and ate directly out of her hand encompassed the happiness and calm serenity that I was experiencing myself. As it grew closer to 10am when the museums would open I found myself lamenting that I would have to leave the park and return to “real life” outside the park. I noticed, as I wandered through the park towards the exit, how strikingly different the atmosphere was within the park, compared to the hustle and bustle of the city that hovered just outside the park walls, seeming to threaten my little piece of serenity.

However, I was in another world. I was baffled by how two completely different worlds could coexist in such close proximity, though I suppose that’s Kensington for you. I first noticed the “otherworldliness” of Kensington on our group walk with Angie on Sunday morning.

We started off from the hotel and I immediately noticed the drastic change in atmosphere between the quietness of the “interior” of the neighborhood versus the loud busy business street only a block away. The neighborhood was deserted due to the fact that it was the weekend, however Angie pointed out that even if a car drove down the street too loudly the cops would be called. The residents of Kensington truly take pride in their privacy and quiet area. You would never suspect the typical loud, busy, city-thriving atmosphere could exist successfully only a block away. Kensington truly is two worlds within one city.
Angie’s unique tour of London

Follow the umbrella!

Take an unforgettable walk with Angie and learn about the city like nothing you’ve heard before

On Westminster Abbey:
“The front’s not as good as the side”

On Prince Harry:
“He doesn’t come down here much, there’s no one to show his bum to”

On the Sundials of St. Margaret’s Church:
“But given the weather, we never know the time”

On Buckingham Palace:
“Everything that looks gold is”
Traversing and Trespassing Abbey Road

Joel Coon

The weather shifted suddenly from relatively mild to frigid and blustery during the time of our underground journey to Abbey Road Studios in north-central London. Sara and I braved the wind on a short walk from the St. John’s Wood tube stop to the eponymous site of The Beatles’ final album, but the scene was fairly different from the one depicted by the cover of Abbey Road (1969); John, Ringo, Paul, and George all walk stoically in succession along a zebra crossing near the studio on a clear summer day. With rows of green trees and lines of parked cars extending into the background, the image captures the band mid-strut during a calm moment on a lazy afternoon. We, however, approached the crossing on an overcast and bustling Friday morning. The trees were bare and the cars zipped by, only occasionally stopping to allow us fans a chance to capture our very own moment of traversing the venerated spot. In this sense, the journey more resembled a pilgrimage—paying homage to a sacred patch of pavement and the sonic cathedral nearby that fostered many amazing songs.

Since we could not stand in the middle of the busy street, Sara and I settled for a sideline perspective to take pictures of one another’s crossing. Other tourists recruited us to photograph their walk and we soon became a miniature paparazzi. After courteously snapping photos for a few minutes, we walked up to the iron gates and white walls that serve as a security barrier between the sidewalk and the studio’s entrance. Beatles fans from around the globe have transformed the gate into a tablet for writing lyrics, messages, memories, and all number of appreciative graffiti.

I began to feel very much like Charlie Bucket standing outside Abbey Road Studios. A small sign posted on the fence essentially said, “No trespassing! This is a private estate.” After reading such a disheartening message, I began to fear I would not be able to see the inside. And a tantalizing difference between the studio and Willie Wonka’s factory was that people were indeed coming in and out of the building. A man on his telephone watched from a top floor window: his vigilance telling us to keep our distance. I had no chance of getting in. Not even a one-in-a-million golden ticket sweepstakes. All I could do was peer at the building and imagine what audio treasures lay beyond those doors.

Though Abbey Road is most often associated with the Beatles (and for good reason, since it is the site of all the band’s album recordings), it has been the epicenter for many of my other favorite albums: the Zombies’ Odessey and Oracle, Pink Floyd’s The Piper At The Gates of Dawn and The Dark Side of the Moon, and Radiohead’s Kid A were all produced at this facility. But what draws such a talented crowd to this place of humble appearances? Quality interior lighting perhaps? And why is the studio so mysterious about its goings-on? It has only been open for public view once in its history—for 2 months in 1983.

I suppose I realized that weaseling my way into a notoriously private and world famous recording studio would be a tall task. Somehow though, my unbridled excitement overcame any sense of logic. After debating whether or not to try and rush into the front lobby, Sara and I saw a small sign on the inside of the fence, which stated changing hours for the studio’s restaurant. Surely this had to be a public restaurant, we thought. This seemed like the perfect excuse to walk inside the studio and ask for clarification. We bounded across the entry drive and marched up the short set of stairs into the building’s main entry. Two receptionists at a large, curving desk stopped their chatter when we entered the room. I clumsily asked about the studio’s restaurant hours and hoped they might not tell us to scram immediately. “Well, the restaurant did indeed change its hours, but since you two are already here, why don’t you come in and have a look around.” If only this had been the receptionist’s response. Instead, she politely told us that the restaurant, like the whole studio, is private and we needed to leave. Sara and I walked out of Abbey Road a little disappointed, but we ultimately considered our failed attempt a small victory. We strolled along the famed crosswalk one more time as we left, with the studio’s mystery still intact.
I love London. I bought this book in the Tate Modern called *A Lover’s Discourse*. Of professing the words, “I love you,” the author says “Once the first avowal has been made, “I love you” has no meaning whatever; it merely repeats in an enigmatic mode—so blank does it appear—the old message (which may not have been transmitted in these words).” When one professes love to another being, the definition of love is uncertain, questionable. Do we love what this being does for us? Do we love the idea of them? Are we in love with love itself? The idea is that repeating the phrase, “I Love You” has a meaningless connotation, for each time the phrase is delivered the blunter the impact.

This author, Roland Barthes, argues there exists a discourse among people in and out of love. I digress, and propose there exists a different kind of discourse among an individual and the city. Cities possess heartbeats, though each city’s current is not the same as another’s. London has a pulse to which I swoon, but here I must define why. Can I say, “I Love London” without the phrase losing all meaning?

Each day in London has been different; exploratory. One doesn’t necessarily always do what one had planned. When I say I love London, there are infinitesimal facets of what I define by London in my personal experience. Each time I go to London, I can’t be certain of what I’m going to get. For me, these definitions boil down to the people; they are my people by heritage, and my people by preference. The city takes on a life of its own, but arguably conceives this life from the people in it as well.

Londoners have a fervent ability to accept change; even in bad times they make fun of the wrongs and strive for the right. There seems to linger a guarded but affable demeanor in the people with which I interact. An older gentleman on the street kindly offers me directions, asking where I’m from. “If you take that route you’ll be walking til next Christmas, opt for bus 93,” he says. He reminds me of my father in these few moments I’ve known him.

I find I feel most attached to the city not when I am out seeing the sights, but when I am simply living, existing in transit, whether I am aware of my destination or not. A woman on the bus addresses me, telling me about her travels and life experiences. Don’t let men make decisions for you is the underscore of her wise words. I thank her and she wishes me luck, and it feels bittersweet knowing I will never see her again as I exit the bus.

London has an attitude with complexity. I wander awhile after visiting High Gate Cemetery, lost in a residential area. I find a bus stop and ask the driver where I might get off next in order to go home to South Kensington.

The man reminds me of my father, with a clever brow but soft, polite features, and he answers immediately that he will take me there. He proceeds to announce to the bus that all the planned stops will be met, with just a slight detour in the process. I thank him profusely but he acts like it’s nothing, says I remind him of his daughter. When the time comes to finally exit the bus I tell him to have a wonderful day, wishing I could do more for this simple act of kindness.

I love London. I don’t believe saying it ruins the meaning, because my definition of London is different than yours. I love it because I am made to feel at home when I’m there. I love London because I feel comfortable as a foreigner doing things that I wouldn’t do in other cities, such as wandering alone or meeting strangers. I love London because it makes me want to write, and read great literature and history. I love London because I am hers, and she is mine.
“Would you girls like a nice picture of some fish?”

“I’d never be able to do that anymore. I’ve got arthritic fingers, so that intricate ivory carving wouldn’t be possible for me anymore.”

**How do you get something into the V&A?**

“Well, someone must have thought it was quite good, didn’t they?”
At the urging of my many of my art history professors, I knew on my first day traversing London solo that I needed to visit the Victoria and Albert. After taking art history classes for almost four years for my minor, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to finally see some of the works which I had only seen through photographs. I was overwhelmed not only by the sheer size of the building as seen on the map but also by the number and size of each collection. I was especially excited to visit the exhibits on the Renaissance and Architecture. On my ventures through the galleries, I was most impressed with the ability to look down into one of the galleries where restoration work was being completed. It was a nice behind-the-scenes look into all that goes on at museums that visitors do not typically get to be a part of. They could have closed off the section from view like many other institutions choose to do, but I believe their choice to leave the area exposed emphasizes their contribution to education, the process of art restoration, and the importance of art history.

I was also intrigued by the theater, music, and costumes exhibits. These displays contained items that are relatively new compared to some of the other artwork in the neighboring galleries; however, they are still crucial to the study of art history. I believe their inclusion gives the Victoria and Albert Museum a nice, well-rounded view of society. Even though some do not consider all of the media represented as typical works of art (like painting, drawing, or sculpture), they are still art forms and crucial pieces to our cultural puzzle.

Surprisingly the stained glass gallery sparked my interest as well. I find stained glass as beautiful and interesting as many of the other works. However, throughout the 18 hours of art history courses I have taken, there has not been a single stained glass piece assigned as a required piece. Of course, stained glass pieces are mentioned when discussing church architecture and decoration, but they have never been focused on solely. I asked myself how this could be but, as I moved through the rest of the museum, I quickly answered my own question. There are so many pieces of art in this museum alone that all have varying styles, compositions, medium, and techniques. Even a survey course of art history could not begin to cover it all. For example, there was an entire wing of silver objects, with whole rooms devoted to one medium. The Victoria and Albert Museum truly is the jack-of-all-trades tourist attraction in London and should not be missed by anyone.
One of the things I want to do before I turn 30 is to go to at least one Grand Slam tournament. I started paying attention to tennis when a 17-year-old Maria Sharapova, won her first Grand Slam at Wimbledon. I wanted to play tennis but to maintain the finesse of my piano playing my piano teacher insisted that I did not take tennis lessons. The opportunity to visit Wimbledon when I was in London presented itself and I immediately made reservations for the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis and Museum Tour.

On that rainy Monday, I took the tube to Wimbledon. The grounds looked wider and greener in person than they did on TV. Just the thought of the tennis greats who graced the grounds of Wimbledon right where I stood made me shiver with excitement. We went to Center Court. We also visited No. 18 Court, the place where the longest match took place. It lasted 11 hours and 5 minutes! The grass at Wimbledon is very sacred; visitors are not allowed to step on it or touch it. The grass receives solar treatment patch-by-patch every day, and there are electric fences around the grass courts.

The inaugural Wimbledon Championship occurred in 1877 with the Gentlemen’s Singles event. The Championship was initially a fundraising event for a Pony Roller to maintain the grass at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club. The Championship started to attract the best players in the world and is now the most prestigious (and expensive) Grand Slam tournament in the world. Each year, a total of £14,600,000 in prize money is awarded. The museum had an extensive, unsurpassed collection of tennis memorabilia dating from 1555 to the present day. The glittering Championship Trophies, a 3D film, and the interactive displays made the museum visit exciting.

Even though I was not there when the Grand Slam tournament was in session, I am glad I had the chance to visit Wimbledon and cross off an item from my all-important list.

QR Code: London Review -
Sights and Sounds and Russian Accents

http://m.youtube.com/#/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=sVXLuEH1Qqk&desktop_uri=%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DSVXLuEH1Qqk%26feature%3Dyoutub
Many of the places I visited and experiences I had on this trip were rich in imagery that appealed to all the senses – taste, sight, touch, smell, and sounds. In my observations and wanderings, I made several poem “sketches” in order to record my sensory experiences at different places and times:

Kensington Rooftop Gardens, 10:18 am, 3-17.

1.5 acres of Spanish/Tudor/woodland gardens sprout lilies, roses, fruit trees, lounge chairs, and life while the roaring city can be glimpsed below through windows set in the vine-covered walls and Prince Harry’s favorite clubhouse prepares for a wedding as shrimp-fed pink flamingos drink from a babbling stream and everything is alive with a beauty undampened by the rain, radiating an extravagance perhaps best noted by the log-burning heaters marked “too hot to handle.”

Outside the Grange-Strathmore Hotel, 6:44 am, 3-18.

Morning in Royal Burough of Kensington and Chelsea finds a man sweeping pigeons off the pristine sidewalk as a French mère coos “chérie” to her baby carriage and an across-the-street foreign diplomat patiently walks his three-legged dog to the door of his seven-story home where a couple smokers discuss the cold air and the occasional luxury car rolls through the mews, and all smells of laundry and dew-washed wisteria, bathed in as much of a sunrise that London can offer.

British Library, 11:37 am, 3-19.

The treasure of words - some intended to change nations and some never intended for reading at all, but instead for drafting, private correspondence, worship, legal proof of marriage, and personal plans - now publically preserved under specially-lit, climate-controlled glass and read by strangers in an awed silence interrupted only by the sound of a group of schoolboys who, to the dismay of their teacher, are chanting the gallery’s only spoken word: “bogey,” louder and louder.

The Prince of Wales Pub, Cardiff, Wales, 2:17 pm, 3-21.

Raucous crowds filled to windows which leak cold sea air inside, all rowdy and jeering and dressed as clowns or Luigi or Mario or Fred Flinstone and gathered to watch a rugby match with pints of Guinness in hand, brains pie and Welsh sausages heaped on the tables and sporadic pub-wide choruses of “oh, what are you doing?” sung at the flickering TV.

Camdentown Markets, 2:36 pm, 3-22.

Union Jack scarves and Banksy prints sway in river-blown breezes smelling of skillets sizzling the food of a dozen countries while Cyberdog’s midday rave music pours out into stall-filled bustling streets of bronze horse statues and shoppers buying beads, furs, leathers, and mulled wine to the sound of gull cries and “get-your-whatevers-here-cheap” and beat-boxing buskers.
Canterbury is just over an hour east of London by train or coach. It is an ancient city in the modern county of Kent, and the residents have been careful to preserve select portions of its history. Remains of a Roman city wall form the boundary of the Dane John gardens public park. The ruins of Canterbury Castle, which was originally founded a few decades after the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest, stood for close to seven centuries before being converted for use to store coal and coke by the Canterbury Gas Light and Coke Company in the 1820s. And then there is Canterbury Cathedral, seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Anglican church.

On 21 March 2013, the current Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, was enthroned at Canterbury Cathedral. As it turns out, enthronement days are bad days to visit Canterbury Cathedral or the adjacent ruins of St. Augustine’s Abbey. On those days, the cathedral and ruins are closed to tourists. Canterbury Cathedral is walled in and surrounded by shops, hotels, and other business establishments, and on enthronement day, all of the possible viewing locations into the cathedral grounds were closed or guarded by police patrols.

However, on the southwest side of the cathedral there is a lovely gate that normally allows foot traffic. Just outside the gate is a quaint, cobblestone square, across from which lies the Number 12 Tearoom Restaurant. As I sat in a window seat waiting for lunch, I watched from the large windows as crowds slowly gathered around the closed gate and gradually dispersed like tides. French, Spanish, Italian, and other languages peppered the air while students and tourists massed in the square.

As we sipped our tea and soup, my travelling companion and I observed both the gate and the people who would stop and stare at the statues, carvings, and inscriptions covering the gate. We even saw some people attempt to peek through the gap between the large wooden doors. One older woman, dressed from head to toe in hues of violet, stood on the sidewalk watching the watchers, with a color-coordinated purple handbag in tow. She consulted with an elderly chap, braced with a tweed cap and black wool coat against the cold, who carried a fine wooden cane for support. Over the next few minutes, they slowly made their way across the square to the gap in the gate, taking turns to lean and peer through the crack, seeing whatever there was to see in the distance as the enthronement ceremony went on. Despite my weak retelling, it was truly thrilling to watch these two characters approach the gate in their reluctant but curious fashion.

The square, which I later learned is called the Buttermarket, was crowded some two hours later as the gates opened and the attendees of the enthronement paraded out, laypersons and garbed religious alike, while tourists and onlookers, myself included, captured snapshots and video of the scene. I could only imagine what a similar ceremony and conclusion must have looked like nearly 1000 years ago, what kinds of sights and smells Geoffrey Chaucer must have witnessed when crafting his famous work. I’m certain, however, that there was not a Starbucks directly adjacent to the cathedral’s Buttermarket gate as there was when I experienced it.
“My sister Emily loved the moors. Flowers brighter than the rose bloomed in the blackest of the heath for her;—out of a sullen hollow in a livid hill-side, her mind could make an Eden. She found in the bleak solitude many and dear delights; and not the least and best-loved was—liberty,” quotes Elizabeth Gaskell of her close friend Charlotte Brontë. Reflecting on her sister's attachment to the moors and her reluctance to maintain a separation from them, Charlotte indicates the moors, for Emily, were a source of power—a place she could go to create freely and simply be. As I started researching for my thesis on *Wuthering Heights* last summer, I wondered about Emily's curious relationship to the moors and how a young woman—so secluded from society—could craft such an intensely dark masterpiece. I was told repeatedly that I just needed to visit the moors to understand, so skeptical though I was, I planned a two-day trip up to Haworth to see them for myself.

I woke early to catch my train at King’s Cross station to ride two hours north to Leeds, where I made a transfer to the Shipley line and disembarked at Keighley. I walked ten minutes to the bus terminal and caught a bus there that would take me to Haworth. Since they do not announce the stops on the bus, I was a little flustered trying to reorient myself. A man with coke-bottle glasses and several plastic garbage bags leaned over my shoulder and asked if I was going to the Brontë Parsonage Museum. When I asserted that I was, he became very excited and offered to show me the way. More from politeness than anything else, I followed him after we reached the stop.

“I'm writing a novel on the Brontës' madness,” he disclosed with dramatic air and then pointed me in the right direction before leaving abruptly. I trudged up a hill and walked past Haworth Parish Church, where Patrick Brontë was reverend from 1820 to 1861, though the present church was reconstructed in 1879. When I finally reached the museum, I felt a sense of accomplishment, but my journey was far from over. The museum staff greeted me warmly and assisted me with a map for a three-mile hike on the moors to Top Withens, the dwelling that supposedly inspired Emily’s creation of the Wuthering Heights house in the novel.

I started on a residential road and at first caught only momentary glimpses of the moors from in between the houses as I walked. Eventually, the path began to depart from the main road and soon it became a dirt trail. The further I walked, fewer and fewer vestiges of society polluted my view of the moors. I suddenly felt engulfed.
Rolling hills of mossy green and rust surrounded me. Few trees were nearby, but the ones that were had a fragile and weathered, yet paradoxically, robust and timeless look about them. The silence was also strange; it had a presence and demanded that you listen to it, if it is possible to listen to silence. Only the sheep and birds were permitted to penetrate its pall, and when they did, their cries had a startling, fragmentary effect. Still their din melded with the silence, creating an eerie and yet natural symphony of sorts.

I hiked two miles or so until I reached the Brontë waterfall. I've never seen a waterfall quite like this before. Waterfalls, in my mind, drop over cliffs and shoot up hesitating mists. Suicidal trees, leaning over just in case, usually surround them. In Haworth, however, the waterfall seems to cooperate with its surroundings like a slow graceful tear weaving its way down the cheek.

A crude stone bridge called Brontë Bridge connects the two banks, and I quickly crossed it. From there, I continued up a steep path toward a signpost for Top Withens, marking it about a mile away. As I climbed, I tried to imagine the Brontë sisters doing the same in their long dresses.

As I continued on the swiftly disappearing path, through mud and puddles of water, I kept my eye focused on a distant speck. Immediately upon seeing it, I knew it must be Top Withens. Its location, its desolateness, and the way the moors seemed to clutch at it agreed completely with how I had originally visualized the novel's setting.

As I walked the last yards to the ruins, I remembered a few lines from Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*: “I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself.” The isolation one engages on the moors renders these words all the more liberating, and when I finally reached Top Withens—placing my hand upon its cold stone wall—I realized that maybe it’s not so much as merely being on the moors to look at them. But rather more about the feelings of freedom and liberty they evoke from you, when you give them some of your time, your energy, yourself. It is returned to you ten-fold, and gradually I had a glimmer of understanding as to how Emily generated *Wuthering Heights*. 
The Mysterious and Wonderful Stonehenge
Alaine Caudle

If you ever get the chance, I highly suggest visiting Stonehenge. It might seem like it’s just a bunch of big rocks, but it’s actually much more than that. It’s a bunch of big rocks arranged in a circular fashion. But really, all (admittedly terrible) jokes aside, Stonehenge is a truly amazing site to behold and worth the visit.

Getting to Stonehenge from London is a breeze of an hour and a half bus ride. I chose to buy a pass from a bus tour company and the process was very simple and reasonably priced. For the low price of £28, I took a ninety minute nap to Stonehenge, where we were given an hour to worship the gods, or just look at the stones and take pictures, and then hopped right back on the bus to London. However, I found that an hour just didn’t seem like enough time. I could have stood in awe of those big beautiful rocks for at least two hours. And then another good hour could have been spent in the gift shop deciding between the new-school “Stonehenge Rocks!” t-shirt or the classic “Stonehenge – Est. 3000BC” sweater. In the end I went home with neither. The pressure was too great, the line was too long, and I was running too low on time, which, as I mentioned before, just wasn’t enough for such a petrologically intrigued and slow walking American like me. (FYI - petrology is the study of rocks.)

In addition to that, the package I purchased included an audio guide that offered tidbits of information about the mystifying rock formation and surrounding areas. The most interesting bits of information were obviously the various theories about how the stones got there and what their original purpose would have been. Most of the theories seemed quite believable. One theory described that some of the stones may have been rolled on logs for as far as 200km, all the way from Wales, and then pulled upright by hundreds of muscular men. Another, more elaborate theory, included the help of Merlin’s magic to transport the stones from their fabled position in Ireland where they had been constructed by a giant. Naturally, I’ve taken a preference to believing the Merlin theory, but only because I still haven’t given up my childhood dreams of being a witch, much like another famous British wizard who usually goes by the name of Harry James Potter. But for some unknown reason my favorite theory was not included. Though it’s a bit unconventional, if you have an open mind and a sense of humor, you might agree that it’s certainly plausible. So, here it is, no build up – Stonehenge was built by aliens. Yes, I’ll type it again. ALIENS. As any fellow viewer of the television program Ancient Aliens would agree, it must have been aliens who transported and constructed this amazing world wonder. It’s just the best way to explain all the strange anomalies surrounding the structure and its history. It’s the perfect answer to any question. “How did these big ol’ stones get here?” “Aliens.” “Right, and I bet you think the pyramids were built by aliens too?” “Yeah, everyone knows that.” “Oh, good point.” And the argument is over, simple as that.

Well, maybe that’s a bit of an exaggeration, but who doesn’t want to believe that aliens exist? I, for one, think it would be pretty cool if aliens existed and had come into contact with our ancestors of the near past, but I’ll resolve to stay in wonder at the mysterious site that is Stonehenge, and I’ll let you make your own decisions about who put those rocks there and how they did it. (Aliens are still the best choice though.)
The French Connection, or Je ne parle pas Francais
Tanya Spacek

Okay, this isn't going to be about old movies or clothing companies. I'm talking about finding Paris in London and vice-versa. One of the first things you notice about London is how many different languages are spoken within twenty feet of you at any given time.

If you happen to be over near Kensington, however, you'll hear a lot more French. You'll see patisseries advertising baguettes and macarons. You'll hear passing children chattering away in French to their mothers or nannies. You'll walk past signs for the Lycee Francais de Londres, I mean London, and the Ecole de South Kensington.

The French influence isn't just limited to South Kensington either. On a rail journey to Bath, of all places, all of the overhead announcements were made in a smart British accent, followed by an even smarter, and oddly sultry, French translation. I heard French announcements in Paddington Station, as well, as I waited for my train to Bath. King's Cross St. Pancras Station also had French and English announcements, because the Eurostar train departs from there, zooms through the Chunnel and into the heart of Paris at Gare du Nord Station. I noticed that English announcements were made first on the way to Paris, while French announcements were made first on the way back to Londres, I mean London.

When I popped over to Paris for a day-trip, I fully expected to hear no English being spoken at all, and at first this was true. In fact, the only English signs I saw were for Starbucks and McDonald's. Then I visited the Latin Quarter and discovered Shakespeare and Company, a bookstore on the Rive Gauche, I mean Left Bank, known for being a haunt of delightfully naughty authors such as Henry Miller, Anais Nin, and LFK's own William S. Burroughs. Unlike just about anywhere else in Paris, this shop is devoted to English-language books, though there's a selection of French-language literature near the front door. I wasn't brave enough to buy a book in French, as I've learned I can only read enough French to get horribly turned around on the Metro and start leaking tears in the middle of Boulevard Poissonniere, or possibly the middle of rue du Faubourg Poissonniere. Ugh, seriously, that wasn't one of my proudest moments. Instead, I bought a book by Tom Waits that looked appropriately sketchy and misbegotten, and my attempt to conduct the transaction in French was kindly, yet firmly, shot down by the English-speaking owner. C'est la vie. I mean, oh well.
I Can Spot a Muggle a Mile Away

Kaitlynn Howell

Two summers ago, I visited The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios in Orlando. It was just about the most magical place you could imagine. Having grown up with these books and movies, reading them all multiple times and attending several of the movies' midnight premieres, experiencing a replica of the world thrilled me immensely. So when I found out about the Harry Potter Studio Tour in Leavesden, England, and read that you would be visiting the actual sets not replicas, I knew I HAD to go.

Upon arriving in London, I began to notice brochures for various Harry Potter tour packages in many of the brochure stands. Some of the options seemed a little sketchy. One tour promised to pick you up from your hotel and take you to observe such things as a turnstile used by Arthur Weasley and the brick wall used for the entrance to Diagon Alley. While these may have been real filming locations, it seemed like an easy way to dupe unsuspecting tourists. We decided to simply go to the studio tour and to make our own way there via train.

Four of us set out on this journey, and when we arrived by tube to Euston train station, the man behind the ticket counter said, "Watford Junction," as we walked up to the ticket counter. I hesitantly answered that that was where we were traveling to, confused about how he could know where we were going. He answered with a chuckle, "I can spot a Muggle a mile away."

A short ride to Watford Junction and a shuttle ride to Leavesden later, and we had arrived at Warner Bros. Studios. The first stop was the gift shop, which gave just the tiniest glimpse of what was to come, but was magical all on its own. In addition to merchandise, the shop was filled with actual props from the films and was decorated to fit in with the Harry Potter world. We then got in line to wait for our turn into the tour. We were ushered into a theater to watch a short film on the making of the movies, which ended with a shot of Hogwarts’ entrance. The screen lifted to reveal the actual Hogwarts entrance, which opened into the Great Hall! They had moved all of the props and sets from filming into the sound stage, and had arranged it like a museum. There were screens at all the sets with bonus footage and behind-the-scenes information to see.

Everything was breathtaking. The amount of detail that went into the creation of the Harry Potter films is almost unimaginable. From filling thousands of potion bottles with magical substances, to painting all the hundreds of portraits filling the Hogwarts castle walls, to creating 17,000 wand boxes for Ollivander’s, 15,000 of which eventually got blown up in the final film. There were props, costumes, wigs, masks, animatronics, and the actual Number 4, Privet Drive house. One of the most interesting sections of the tour for me was the room housing all of the construction documents and architectural models of the sets. As an interior design major I’ve done many complicated construction documents, but none even come close to the level of complexity that went into designing the Weasley’s Burrow. One of the architectural models even went so far as to include a tiny replica of a stained glass window. The level of craftsmanship was magnificent.

Harry Potter studios definitely ranks as one of my favorite parts of my London trip. This should certainly be a destination for anyone else who always wondered if their Hogwarts letter didn’t get lost in the mail on their eleventh birthday.
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CASH        | 4.50  |

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CHANGE £0.71

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portobello@hummingbirdbakery.com

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Take Away

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Change Due £0.00

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Everything is Nicer in England
Valery Herman

The one thing that struck me most about England was the excessive amount of politeness that pervades English culture. Brits seem to have a higher standard of manners than most Americans I know. But it was more than just the people; everything about England seemed more polite. The announcements on the tube called, “alight here for ____” instead of just saying get off. Construction signs would apologize for any inconvenience caused, and even the buses apologized with the words “sorry this bus is not in service” written above the front window.

Despite all that I had read about the English being cold and unfriendly, my experience often proved the opposite. There were multiple instances where Brits assisted us with navigation and suggestions for things to do. On one occasion in Oxford, as we huddled around our map, clearly lost, a woman approached us and offered to help without us even asking. We met one particular Englishman, named Ian, who actually walked us to the nearest tube station after giving us directions. Sometimes cashiers would help us pay them, offering little encouragements like “yes, that’s a twenty. That one’s a fifty…give me two more of those…” They all seemed very understanding of our confusion as foreigners.

When Sara and I went to Cardiff, we had to take the tube very early in the morning and got to see what life is like for Londoners on their daily commute to work. That morning the trains were massively delayed. People were clearly upset, but surprisingly not vocal—they just waited quietly and patiently. I felt like New Yorkers in the same situation would have been cursing, or at least would have looked up from their newspapers. The train conductor kept repeating things like ‘full apologies for this’ when it wasn’t even his fault; we were just waiting for the train in front of us to leave the platform.

Once in Cardiff, Sara and I then had to take a bus. We were prepared for the £1.70 bus fare stated on a nearby sign, so we got out our exact change as we waited. When we boarded the bus, Sara went first, and made a motion to hand her change to the bus driver. He looked at her quizzically and said, “What are you doing? It goes in that…” pointing down. But then he said reassuringly, “It’s all part of the learning process” which I thought was very sweet. Later that same day at a bar, I wanted to order the £5.99 Fish and Chips with a drink afternoon special. I chose some fruity concoction because it sounded yummy and I don’t generally like the taste of alcohol. When I went up to the bar and ordered, the bartender told me that I could not get that drink with the lunch special, so I told him to forget the deal in favor of getting the drink I wanted. He said, “I would advise you to get the deal, because otherwise you’ll be paying £6.79 for your Fish and Chips instead of a fiver.” I thought it strange but refreshing to have a helpful bartender rather than one who only cared about making more money.

Another experience that surprised me occurred one afternoon while riding on the tube. An elderly man got on, and a younger guy automatically stood up to offer his seat. I was surprised by how commonplace this action seemed because it was such an automatic response. I wouldn’t have room enough to mention all the times that English people apologized for my bumping into them, and I even had multiple Londoners apologize for the bad weather during our visit. My experiences have led me to conclude that politeness is a natural English reaction.
It wasn’t until I had everything packed for London and was on my way out the door when I realized that my suitcase was missing a wheel. “Well, it’s too late now,” I thought to myself, as I managed to roll my crippled suitcase out of my apartment. During the drive to the airport, I couldn’t help but think to myself what the underlying meaning my luggage, particularly this missing wheel, symbolized as I prepared myself for the amazing experiences I would soon have in a country that was all but familiar to me.

Having moved to the United States from China at the age of 8, I have had experience dealing with the unforeseeable obstacles that come with going to a new country. Whether the stay is a week-long trip or a complete relocation of one’s life, many surprises occur along the way to add stories, silliness, and self-discovery to one’s transition into a new culture. The first of many self-discoveries or self-realizations that I experienced while in London was that I am very subpar when it comes to packing. While I stood in line waiting to enter the National History Museum during our first day in South Kensington, I slowly became aware of the cold mist that was starting to cling to my caramel skin. Suddenly, I realized my colossal mistake – I had packed for the entire week while only looking at the high temperatures of each day. This wouldn’t have been an issue if the high and low temperature deviation for each day wasn’t on a magnitude of at least 20 degrees!

As it turns out, this mindless mistake quickly turned into an adventure, as I ended up going clothes shopping the next day with Nicole, Julia, Kaitlynn, Valery, Kelsey and Alaine. With their help, I was able to pick out one of the most fashionable pieces of clothing currently available in London. I walked out of H&M wearing a jacket that oddly resembled the offspring crossed between a cheetah and a member of the Blue Man Group. I later noticed that many British girls were stealing glances at me as I sported my new blue cheetah rain suit on the tube – my self-confidence was at an all-time high! That was until someone pointed out that they simply had never seen an Asian as tall as me before…

Despite my missing wheels, lack of packing skills, and poor European fashion taste, I have learned to embrace the unplanned bumps and hiccups that inevitably accompany traveling abroad. I later realized that the missing wheel actually made my entire trip more satisfying – while it provided resistance throughout my journey, it made my eventual arrival in London that much sweeter. I learned to appreciate what others may take for granted, whether it be 30 minutes of sunshine the first day we arrived in London, the warmth of an unfashionable jacket, or the simple convenience that a suitcase wheel can provide. Maybe next time I will pack for my trip while intentionally disregarding the low temperatures for each day. Accidentally doing so on this trip gave me plenty of room to bring back things I consider much more valuable than anything I could have ever packed. This is inevitably how I want to live my life each day – never burdening myself with unnecessary baggage while constantly replenishing my suitcase with memories and experiences that enrich my existence.
I have visited London three times in the last four years on KU study abroad trips. Every visit has been spaced out over the four years I’ve been at KU, meaning my maturity and outlook on the city has changed with each trip. Even though each vacation to this gray city has seen a different version of myself, the constant for me is one, middle-aged woman: Cath Kidston (Sorry Mary).

Cath Kidston is an English designer, businesswoman, and lover of floral repetition. She’s best known for her home décor items, which were my first purchases from her store on my first visit to London. A girl in my group for the British Summer Institute (my initial trip across the pond) showed me her Cath Kidston pillowcase and said we had to go to the store because I would love it. I’ve never gotten worked up over pillowcases, and didn’t really plan on starting at this point in my life.

But when I entered the Cath Kidston store for the first time, I looked at dishes differently, I fell in love with a bedspread, and even though I use my passport once every few years, it needed a beautiful, polka-dot cover. The pastel colored, dainty, floral patterns spoke to me, and I knew then and there I would spend way too many pounds on decorating my crummy Lawrence home.

I always say London is my favorite city in the world, and it’s hard to go back and forth in my visits there. When I’m back in Kansas, going to class, sitting at work, doing the same old same old I’ve done the last four years, it’s nice to reach for my pale blue mug with the yellow flowers to remind myself I’m not that far away from afternoon tea.
Twice I visited the Science Museum and twice I was impressed. The number of cool pieces on display made me feel like a little kid looking at those huge Eyewitness picture books. Within the a few gallery spaces were many of the cars, trains, cameras, and other devices that I spent many days marveling at.

The first trip to the Science Museum was a delirious swirl, my tired mind running on fumes and nearing hallucination. I stared open-jawed at the steam engine they had in the entrance hall, shocked that technology so old could work so silently and efficiently. In the first gallery, the surface of the earth was projected onto an enormous balloon ball, but it took us more than it should have to figure out it was not, in fact, a hologram. Various spacecraft littered this gallery including a moon probe and an open-topped rocket that looked like the SPECTRE craft that captures the Soviet and US capsules in the Bond film “You Only Live Twice”.

The next room is where I became giddy with excitement: it was a potpourri of machines and artifacts from the late 19th and 20th century. At the front of the gallery are several steam engine trains, from early experimental ones to more standard trains. Suspended above was a sleek silver propeller plane. A motor boat named the Miss England was positioned so that it looked like it was riding a wave. It was from the 1910s and had a beautiful black engine built into the back and a pulley rudder. There were a ton of cars, including an original handle-steering style car, a Model T, an electric London cab, a goofy art-deco style speedster, and a big stack of mid-20th century cars on the wall. The gallery contained several film cameras, many still photography cameras, as well as telegraph machines and record players from all through the century. The upper hallways had miniatures of many vehicles and trains including a cross-section of a steam engine and a model of a silver Rolls Royce on display. The most perplexing (perhaps the most disheartening) of the objects included was a Super Nintendo and a Game Boy which are really only about as old as I am. Do those really need to be in a museum yet?

That’s where we stopped on the first trip because we were so tired. On return, I came back to the same galleries to take pictures of all the interesting things I saw, but I also went to the upper galleries where the museum had an awesome exhibit on time pieces and another one on the history of communications. The time piece exhibit was a vast array of different hourglasses, clocks, pocket watches, and even an automated telephone dictation device that would “read” the time to you over the phone via optical disc recordings. I was disappointed to discover they hadn’t included any of John Harrison’s original chronometer time pieces that were crucial to the establishment of accurate longitudinal calculation, but apparently those were at the National Maritime Museum. The communications exhibit was shorter, but it had plenty: from a huge automated telephone switch board to telegraphs and examples of teletype.

The Science Museum was not without its misses. Luckily, they were the exception and not the rule. They had an exhibit called the “Listening Post” which was supposed to represent the sound of the internet, so I was expecting to sit into a dark room and listen to a dial tone. Instead, it was a series of about 100 screens that displayed random words which were subsequently dictated by a robot voice a la Microsoft Sam. The other miss was an exhibit on agricultural machinery, but that’s probably more because of my lack of interest rather than a lack of good content.

If you have any interest in vehicles, machinery, communications, or just like seeing cool stuff, the Science Museum is the place to go.
Quitting social media is like quitting nicotine; after three days you start to not miss it.

Or at least that was my experience in London. After arriving at Heathrow airport around 6 a.m. and checking into the Grange Strathmore, our class had only scheduled a group dinner for that evening, leaving the rest of the day open for jet-lag recovery and whatever exploration we felt up to. Once I had my tube pass, I threw my bags into my room and headed out in search of a SIM card. My cell phone was already unlocked, so all I needed to do was find a compatible SIM card that would let me use my data connection.

I first tried the local Tesco, an international supermarket chain, and while there were SIM cards available for purchase, they were not the right kind for my phone. While I asked a Tesco clerk where she would go to buy a cell phone, another woman overheard, and together they started to give me directions by landmark. I'm usually very good with directions, or I at least thought I was, but I tend to use operational directions; “Go right, continue for three blocks, turn left,” that sort of thing. Landmark directions are not my strong suit, especially in a brand new location. About the only landmarks I caught through their respective accents was “Kensington” and “tube.” I thanked them both and walked across the street to the Gloucester Road tube stop. There, I consulted the famous London Underground map, hoping that I would figure out my next step.

“Kensington,” as it turns out, is part of the name of two tube stops: South Kensington and High Street Kensington, both with connections to the Circle and District routes which run through the Gloucester Road stop, both one stop away from my current location, but in opposite directions. I chose South Kensington, found the train going in the right direction, and rode to the first stop. To my chagrin, I had chosen poorly. The area around South Kensington tube stop is quite lovely, and I planned to spend more time there, but I did not see any cell phone shops amongst the cafes, banks, or health pill shops. I went back into the tube stop, hopped on the Circle line in the opposite direction, rode for two stops, and alighted at High Street Kensington.

Immediately after exiting the station, I saw a Three store (a cellphone store) inside the same building and walked in. I explained my situation to the salespeople and they had me going in five minutes with a SIM card that fit my particular phone and a pay-as-you-go plan for £15 with “all you can eat” data, just what I was looking for. I thanked them for their help and made my way back to the tube, exited at Gloucester Road, and went back to
the hotel, finally ready to crash and nurse the cold I had picked up somewhere between Kansas City and London.

Over the next week, having data on my phone made me at times the go-to person for directions and advice. Others in our group relied on Wi-Fi signals that were spotty at best and charged by the hour at worst. Having the ability to pinpoint my location without asking for directions or consulting passersby made me feel truly independent and that I could navigate the whole city confidently.

The strange thing was, though, that I altered my phone behaviors. Back home, I used my smart phone primarily as a music player, social media hub, and email machine. In London I was walking around much more, taking pictures and making observations, without the time or the inclination to make a Twitter post as frequently as before. I used my phone mainly as a map, a camera, and occasionally as a Google machine to consult previous travelers’ advice (“Siri, what’s the best sushi restaurant in Kensington?”). I still used my phone to communicate with home, though not as a phone, oddly. Instead, I used my “all-you-can-eat” data to make video calls with very few quality issues, rain or shine.

After a few days, I didn’t really miss checking up on my Twitter feed. I only opened the Facebook app to keep apprised of what further group events were scheduled or to make plans for the following days. My social media presence was virtually nonexistent for that week, and I found that I didn’t really miss it. I did use Foursquare, a location-based social media app, to “check in” to museums and pubs or wherever else I went, but then only to record my movements, not to keep in contact with friends back home. I did use Twitter to crowd source site seeing advice, and even then I was in and out, no reading about what gossip or news item my Twitter buddies were fixated on for a particular day.

In some ways, I envied my travelling companions that had no means of communication except for the occasional stop at a Starbucks for free Wi-Fi. I was still connected, whereas they were free, completely unchained to the demands of social media or email except maybe twice a day. They might not have known exactly where they were at all times or been able to Google “changing of the guard time Buckingham palace,” but they managed to get by with paper maps and friendly advice from locals. I wasn’t as close to London as they were.

All in all, I don’t regret purchasing a SIM card and staying connected. Video chatting with my wife with the British Museum behind me was truly one of those “magical” experiences all the ads are always going on about. But, I do have to admit, I will always wonder what kind of London I would have experienced without the world in my pocket.
A trip abroad would not be complete without meeting colorful people. We met an unusually high number of interesting characters who provided us with endless entertainment and material for stories. In order to personalize the experience and protect identities, we assigned many of these characters nicknames.

We stumbled upon a humble cart, adorned with scarves for sale. A group of us were browsing the scarves when a short, Albanian shop owner struck up a conversation. Once he found out we were American, he began elbowing us and saying “I love American girls!” in his raspy, accent-laced voice. He randomly decided that Kaitlynn and I were the “cheeky” ones, and he kept inviting the group of us out for dinner. He insisted that “money was no object” and that taking us all to dinner was no problem at all. We deemed this untrue, because really just how profitable is a scarf stand? We ended up visiting Basil’s scarf stand two more times—once in order to introduce him to more London Reviewers and a third time to exchange a scarf. While we were naming the goofy salesman on the tube ride home, Kaitlynn suggested Basil (pronounced like castle.) For some reason, it just seemed appropriate. This was the beginning of our tradition of naming the characters we encountered.

A group of us decided to explore London nightlife by going on an organized pub crawl. There, we met Tom, one of the group leaders. He was incredibly British and very funny. We had an in-depth conversation on the ubiquitous presence of CC-TV in London, and he compared the entire surveillance situation to “Big Brother.” He went on to talk about music as well. He insisted that all pop music is “boringly cheesy” and he called our group “bloody tourists” when we squealed at an oncoming double-decker bus while crossing the street. In addition to sharing his opinion, he put us to the test. Tom asked us to speak in our best British accents. After he judged our attempts at imitating him, I turned the tables on him. His “American” accent was a low, grizzly voice. In what sounded like some sort of mix between an English and an American southern accent, he said, “I have my gun, and I’m protecting my land because I am American!” From that point on, we all decided to stick to our natural dialects.

During a night out at Verve, a group of girls headed to the restroom. There, we met an incredibly inquisitive bathroom attendant we named Yolanda. Once she found out we were American, she barraged us with questions about visiting the United States. “You can bring friends from other countries to America, right? If I was your friend, you could bring me with you, right?” She insisted on finding out the rules on coming to America. I truly believe she thought we would invite her to return home with us. Unfortunately for Yolanda, none of us extended her an invitation back to the United States.

Whether it was declining dinner with a scarf salesman or imitating accents with a pub crawl guide, the characters we met added a bit more adventure to our time in London.
BASIL

THE ALBANIAN SCARF MAN

‘HELLO BEAUTIFUL AMERICAN GIRLS’

TWO FOR £FIVE

The money is no object. I take all of you to the movies.
THREE BROOMSTICKS PROUDLY BREWED BY HOGSMERD VILLAGE

Premium Butterscotch Ale
During my brief stay in London, I made a variety of observations on the natives in an attempt to conceal my true identity as a tourist. I concluded that in order to be regarded as a member of this exclusive group, one need only wear a scarf, walk very fast, follow the queue code, and act perpetually displeased.

My first rule to being a Londoner is probably just a seasonal necessity. Then again, what with England’s incessant rain, perhaps not. All I know is that there was not a single Brit with a naked neck. By my observation, scarves are a necessity.

To look British and fit in you must walk with purpose; lollygagging is simply not tolerated. Maybe this goes for life in any big city, but the life of a Londoner is fast-paced. Throughout my entire week in London I constantly felt like I wasn’t doing things fast enough, especially just walking. The Underground practically has an express lane, which one must carefully avoid if one does not wish to be trampled on or cursed at. And above all if you wish to camouflage yourself in this fast-paced world, do not be the obvious foreigner stopped in the middle of the sidewalk to consult your map. According to my observations, this is one of the most surefire ways to make a Londoner very cross.

On my last day in London I went off on my own and was twice asked for directions, ironically enough while I myself was quite lost. I was wandering in search of the Churchill War Rooms. After successfully navigating myself through two line transfers and reaching the correct tube stop, I then realized that the short walk would in fact be much more of a challenge. Passing by Big Ben and Westminster, I spotted an ice cream kiosk lady who answered my navigational query with a simple “it’s just behind that red building”. However, I realized too late, I had asked her where St. James’ Park was, and not the Churchill War Rooms. After stealthily consulting my pocket-sized London A-Z, I resigned myself to the long walk ahead. I had to circle the entirety of the park, past Buckingham Palace and Trafalgar Square before I found my destination. It was during this roundabout route that I was stopped for directions. The first poor lost soul wanted to know where Trafalgar Square was. I informed him that was twice asked for directions, ironically enough while I was wandering in search of the Churchill War Rooms. After successfully navigating myself through two line transfers and reaching the correct tube stop, I then realized that the short walk would in fact be much more of a challenge. Passing by Big Ben and Westminster, I spotted an ice cream kiosk lady who answered my navigational query with a simple “it’s just behind that red building”. However, I realized too late, I had asked her where St. James’ Park was, and not the Churchill War Rooms. After stealthily consulting my pocket-sized London A-Z, I resigned myself to the long walk ahead. I had to circle the entirety of the park, past Buckingham Palace and Trafalgar Square before I found my destination. It was during this roundabout route that I was stopped for directions. The first poor lost soul wanted to know where Trafalgar Square was. I informed him that was not in fact from London, but pointed him in the right direction regardless, having just passed there myself. A bit later, a French couple asked me where Buckingham Palace was. Was I beginning to look native? Perhaps it was the new scarf I had bought a few days previous. As I pondered what made me suddenly look British enough to seem like a trustworthy source of directions, I realized the primary rule of looking like a Londoner: walking with purpose.

Knowing the etiquette of queueing is of primary importance if you wish to blend in. At first I found signs like “please queue here” humorous, until I realized the true importance and artform of the queue. You actually have to be careful where you stand, because Brits might start queueing behind you! Once I was waiting for a friend at an outdoor ATM, and as I stood there people assumed I was in a queue and began waiting behind me. The moments when I felt most British were whilst queueing. I formed the head of a queue for the toilets at Whole Foods. A lady came in and despondently asked, “Is there a queue for the toilets?” I responded with a knowingly abject nod, and have never felt more British since.

Breaking the queue codes can have disastrous effects. One afternoon in Oxford we went to Starbucks for a place to sit down and some Wi-Fi. I was in the queue and an older British man stood behind me, behind a mass of obnoxious foreign children in front of us. As we waited and I contemplated my order, a horde of more children walked in and joined the clump already at the front, thereby queue jumping! The Englishman waiting behind me loudly muttered a string of very vulgar curses and stormed off without his coffee. Queue-jumping is a serious offense not to be taken lightly. You could topple the delicate balance of the English ecosystem. Queues are not a matter to be trifled with.

The last item on my checklist of how to pass yourself off as a Londoner is a general manner of discontent. A statement of graffiti I found in my bathroom stall at the British Museum shows this Londoner attitude. Someone had written: “London, great place to visit, awful place to live. Trust me.” Another example of the London outlook occurred one evening when Kaitlynn and I went to the Book of Mormon lottery to try and win a pair of tickets. There, we witnessed what I like to call ‘a very London reaction’. As each of the tickets was pulled, the winner’s names and where they were from were loudly announced. There were a few Americans and people from all over England. Each person whose name was drawn would scream and jump as if they had won the actual lottery, but the first person from London whose name was drawn just walked up to the front and shrugged, mumbling something along the lines of “eh, not bad” which got a good laugh from the crowd. Londoners are simply not impressed by anything. They are however, vexed by just about everything. At least they have such exceptional taste in scarves.
Soundtracks are unquestionably my favorite element of entertainment. I am constantly cultivating my own soundtrack for present, past, and future experiences. If you and I are having a conversation, I promise you some little percentage of my brain is mapping the perfect music to match our exchange. At this point, it’s innate.

I made no less than five playlists in preparation for London. I covered everything from classic British rock (Rolling Stones, The Beatles) to punk rock (Sex Pistols, the Clash) into modern pop (Sugababes, Kate Nash). But it took walking through the city to make those songs come alive and feel authentic in a completely new way.

A longtime favorite of mine is “England” by the National, a contemporary New York City based band. I also have a cover of the song by an appropriately English band, Mumford & Sons. The chorus chimes, “you must be somewhere in London, you must be loving your life in the rain.” Is there any statement truer about this trip? The song played on loop on my mental record player as I explored Kensington with Sara on our first day in the city, and recurred with every rain shower we soaked through.

The tube felt like the collective veins of the city, pumping people in and out its metropolitan heart. Nothing sounds more like a pulsating heartbeat than “London Calling” by the Clash. People watching on a late night tube with “London Calling” blasting through your earphones is an experience, a real one, that I recommend to anyone and everyone. You won’t be as cool as Joe Strummer (worry not—none of us are) but you will feel like you are, which is arguably more important to make the experience work.

Oxford sounded like Nick Drake, an underappreciated in his own time British folk singer from the 1970s who has become quite popular in recent memory. Specifically, the song “Place to Be” became the perfect background music to the Oxfordian ancient quietness. The Oxford Tube ride up north through the deeply verdant and peacefully pastoral countryside perfectly matched Drake’s understated acoustic guitar and gentle vocals. Drake’s calls to “just hand me down, give me a place to be” echoed my near-begging to be an Oxbridge candidate almost too well. But it also reinforced this pervasive feeling I had about the whole day trip, that Oxford simply was the place to be that day, just the right space at the right time on the right day to have a deep, real experience.

Other favorite English voices and bands, like Coldplay (particularly their first and second records), the Beatles, Lily Allen, and the Artic Monkeys among others painted their own sonic landscape over the sounds and faces of bustling London, building yet another layer on an already impossibly complex city.

At the end of the day, “England” is still my London Review theme song. The bridge hums, almost like a mantra, “put an ocean and a river between everybody ever, between everything, yourself, and home. Put an ocean and a river between everything, yourself, and home.” With the Atlantic and the Thames as my security blanket, I safely wandered through and soaked up London as an un tethered, open explorer. London demands that kind of freedom. I think travel demands that break with home, that break with your home self, to become your London self.
Ever since I decided to go vegetarian at the age of nine, I’ve had my share of dining struggles while traveling. For a family dinner in Cozumel on my twelfth birthday, our waiter understood “no meat” to mean “fish”. When, as a teenager, I went to stay with a family friend in the bayous of Louisiana, she was so perplexed at how to cook for me that she served me broccoli and blueberry pie for every meal. In Southern France I ended up eating way too much eggplant parmesan, and, most recently, on a trip to Texas, I had to extensively search menus for beef-free food. Needless to say, I was a bit nervous about eating in London, with its popular staples of fish and chips, bangers and mash, and (hopefully non-Lovett’s) meat pies. But for a country with a long tradition of eating meat, England surprised me with its wide variety of vegetarian options.

I had expected to find vegetarian food in the nicer restaurants, but the thing that most pleasantly surprised me was being able to eat like a normal human in pubs! In America, vegetarian bar food means one thing – mozzarella sticks. But in London, pub menus always included multiple vegetarian meals (not just appetizers!), conveniently marked with a “V”. And while you’ll occasionally find a bar in America that includes a veggie burger option, in London, almost every meat dish is also offered with veggie meat substitute – meaning I was able to try lots of tasty meat-free meals without sacrificing the cultural experience of eating traditional British dishes. And in my opinion, England’s “meh” culinary reputation is a complete lie, because the meals I enjoyed there were some of the best I’ve ever had (and many can attest to my after-meal serotonin drunkenness!).

The Highlights:
• Vegetarian Welsh dragon sausages and mash with peas and veggie gravy – The Prince of Wales, Cardiff.
• Lemon and pea risotto with zucchini – The Turf Tavern, Oxford.
• Fried tofu, onions, peppers, mushrooms, zucchini and noodles in a spicy “chilli men” sauce – Wagamama’s, Bloomsbury.
• Baked pancakes filled with cheesy asparagus, peas, and spinach – The Eagle and Child, Oxford.
• Vegetarian fish, chips and “mushy peas” – Forgotten pub, Kensington.
• Sweet potato pithivier – The Swan at the Globe Theater, Bankside.
I was always good at playing pretend, a skill that made me the most popular babysitter on the block. However, long gone are the days when it was socially acceptable to play house or teacher, so traveling has become my replacement “pretend game.” Everywhere I visit I pick up and try on part of the local culture, language, and mannerisms. I subtly study the people there and emulate them like a pretend-game-pro, much to the confusion of my traveling companions I might add. On a trip to South Carolina I picked up a southern drawl so good my family thought I was fixin’ to turn into Paula Dean. Perhaps it means I’m having some sort of identity crisis, but the more likely explanation is that my imitation stems from an interest of people and how they live.

My trip to London was no exception. My performance as a Brit was not Oscar-worthy, but I felt at home among the British idiosyncrasies, mannerisms, and customs. Among a community with an impulsive need to say sorry, an expectation to dress nice, and an obsession with the weather, I felt as though I found my people. So if you too want to play pretend British, here’s some advice:

1) Don’t be rude—This rule is conceivably the most important rule to follow in your quest to be British. It applies in absolutely any situation whether you’re with friends or strangers. For example, when the doors open to a crowded tube, don’t shove your way in like the group of Spanish teenagers I encountered. And if you’ve already committed this first offense, at the very least stand quietly and breathe as discretely as possible. If you are one of the poor victims witnessing this blatant display of rudeness, then you may share a disapproving or annoyed look with a fellow victim, but never say anything or cause a scene. Oh, and “sorry” (pronounced as “Suri”) is always an appropriate response to any interaction with anyone particularly if the other party is responsible for some kind of offense.

2) Laugh at yourself—Self-deprecating humor is the best kind of humor, if for no other reason than because it doesn’t break rule number one. While at a British comedy performance, I noticed the jokes that highlight the strange things Brits do or say made the audience laugh the hardest.

3) Say things like “charming,” “quite right,” and my personal favorite “spot on.” Using these adjectives will assure that you sound British.

Irony. The perfect word to describe the amount of time spent hunting in desperation for the perfect pair of patriotic sneakers in my size. These tennis shoes embodied everything that I stand for: a pristine level of comfort and a love for my country. The obsession that engrossed me on that Tuesday was a feeling I had never felt before in my life. It was a deep desire to own these shoes, to call them my own, to bounce around Lawrence while all of my friends would shout, “SWEET KICKS” as I holler back, “THANKS GIRL”. These tennis shoes were going to define me.

I spent countless hours on the Tube zipping from shopping district to shopping district longing for these shoes. I ditched friends, lunch and museums by telling myself I would get some sort of unmatched pleasure from finding them.

Fast forward.


As I was on the plane in my Advil PM stooper, I began to contemplate the significance of this experience that consumed the majority of my trip. I began to ask myself if these shoes would still have been desirable if I were to see them in Jock's Nitch on Massachusetts Street. The answer was disheartening, because the answer was no.
“There is nothing like firsthand evidence,” he remarked; “as a matter of fact, my mind is entirely made up upon the case, but still we may as well learn all that is to be learned.”

—Sherlock Holmes, A Study in Scarlet, by Arthur Conan Doyle

The Sherlock Holmes Museum lies in London’s Marylebone district just outside Regent’s Park. If you’ve always been a fan of the Sherlock Holmes fiction like I am, I suppose it’s worth visiting if you have spare time while on a London spring break trip.

Wait, what? Why the faint praise? Shouldn’t a Sherlockian (or Holmesian for all of you Great Game players) be found reeling on the pavement outside of what is arguably the world’s most famous address? Well, after paying the requisite £8 entry fee and standing in queue for 20 minutes in the unseasonably cold rain, even the most die-hard fan may become a bit disenchanted when the Victorian era-garbed bobby opens the door and ushers you into 221b Baker Street.

What lies inside are myriad deerstalker caps, 19th century service revolvers displayed behind glass, and more than enough physician’s bags to sustain the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers for several Afghanistan tours that span each of the museum’s three floors. There is the slipper containing pipe tobacco near the fireplace and a dagger pinning recent post to the mantle above the same. These artifacts, while interesting and drawn from the canon, are, nevertheless, fakes. And that’s the final problem of the “museum;” it’s a collection of fakes about a fake character at a fake address. If you’re looking for a sense of realism or verisimilitude, well, the game is still afoot.

It’s not that the Sherlock Holmes Museum is disappointing, per se. The issue lies in managing expectations. The Sherlock Holmes Museum is fundamentally a tourist trap based upon a fictional character (albeit the most famous fictional British character before a certain boy wizard came into the world). There’s more than enough merchandise available in the attached gift shop to validate the experience, if you consider an overpriced bookmark or a prohibitively expensive calabash pipe to be evidence of validation. Just as the oft-misquoted “elementary” line is an embellishment that may or may not enrich a Holmes experience, so too is the museum.
The moment the storefront of James Smith & Sons, est. 1830, comes into view, you know why this family-owned business is a revered London institution. Umbrellas. The nylon-covered devices that shelter us from Mother Nature's fury.

I walked into the store and took a moment to take in my surroundings. Umbrellas of all types, neatly folded and displayed, were staring back at me. Two sales associates were working on this late afternoon: an older, white-haired gentleman who turned his nose upon the entrance of two uncouth American males and another more welcoming young man who greeted us warmly. Upon hearing that I was free to open and test any of the umbrellas, I jokingly asked if that would result in bad luck. He smiled and turned to point at the wall overhead and stated, “that’s why we have our lucky horseshoe.” My gaze followed his gesture to an enormous gold talisman that was likely needed to counteract the daily actions of curious visitors over the years.

With a college student’s budget, I narrowed the scope of my search closer to the entrance of the store, finding myself unable to afford the rising costs on the white labels dangling from the handles of the larger and more ornate umbrellas. Some of the most remarkable had silver animal heads for handles and striped, houndstooth, or tattersall patterned fabrics. The most expensive were solid-stick umbrellas, created from a single piece of wood, that could also serve as walking sticks.

In response to my question of which products were best-sellers, the sales associate carefully selected a tube frame with a black canopy and demonstrated proper umbrella opening and closing technique, while offering some cautionary advice about drying umbrellas after use. When he grasped the handle and smoothly pulled it from the display case, I could only imagine that King Arthur once effortlessly removed his sword from the stone in a similar manner.

I gave minimal attention to his words, because I was too distracted by the visual work of art in front of me, that was almost like architecture, with clean, straight lines, taut nylon fabric, and a long, narrow metal frame that melted into the curve of a dark brown wooden handle. Simply put, James Smith & Sons crafts products that possess beauty in their functional simplicity, unlike the majority of souvenirs that serve no functional purpose at all.

With my purchase in hand, I exited the doors and walked the streets of London as the proud new owner of a gent’s brolly from the oldest such shop in all of Europe. And if my admiration for beautiful craftsmanship doesn’t dissipate soon, I may find myself needing a much larger umbrella stand.
I am somewhat of a coffee enthusiast. Not so much because I love the flavor, but more so because I need it to survive. As a person for whom mornings are challenging (I often seem to wake up on the wrong side of the bed), coffee seems to be the only cure to turn me into a functional human being before noon.

In London I changed my dollars for pounds, my sweatshirt for a raincoat, and most importantly, coffee for tea. I found that the time spent sipping on tea and nibbling on biscuits was more energizing than coffee.

Here in the states, I’m always behind. I stay up all hours of the night to finish a lab report and then rise again at the crack of dawn to study for a test the next day. There is never a break in my day because there is always something that has to be done. So it’s no wonder I treat coffee like a drug to keep me alert from assignment to assignment.

In London, the people have set aside a place for tea in their day. It’s not the effects from the beverage that get them through their hectic lives, but the time spent drinking it. The brief reprieve they get while drinking their tea is not a luxury we get in the states. Coffee is marketed in America as cheap and fast to fit a busy lifestyle. “To-Go” cups are almost synonymous with cups of coffee. By contrast tea is marketed in the UK as a leisurely, even ritualistic elixir.

Now to be fair, being a continent away from school stressors and job applications did a lot for my mental and physical wellbeing. The tea can’t take all the credit for my rejuvenation, but I am confident that taking a break in the middle of my day to simply “be” while drinking tea would do more than the jittery rush of coffee for my sanity. Sometimes you just need a tea time out.
Pimm's.
The Queen's choice.
Her long fingers wrap around a Collins glass soon after the bartender places it front of her. She admires the house-made candied ginger, cucumber and fresh mint garnishing her Pimm’s cup. Just before tucking the mint neatly into the glass, the bartender claps it with a light hand, bruising it just enough to release its oils and aroma. Its scent hangs gently in the air; it smells of summer. She smiles at the herb’s fragility, so easy to abuse, to embitter.

The Pimm’s cup is traditionally made with Pimm’s No. 1, a gin-based cordial infused with herbs and quinine, invented by James Pimm, the owner of an oyster bar in London in 1823. Pimm originally designed the liqueur as a digestif, and its recipe to this day remains a coveted secret.

Instead of replacing the bottle on its shelf, the bartender leaves it on the counter near a flickering candle. She notices the liqueur’s deep red hue, as the candlelight reflects off the glass. Her own glass holds more of an ochre color, because of the ginger ale she has chosen to accompany the Pimm’s. A man sits down next to her and after a sidelong glance orders a Pimm’s cup from the barkeep.

She listens as the bartender starts another. He pours 1 and ½ ounces of Pimm’s into the metal bottom of the shaker, adds ¾ ounces of lime juice and ¾ ounces of ginger syrup and tops with ice. He secures the top of shaker with a brusque smack of his palm and shakes vigorously. Pouring out the frothy beverage into a Collins glass, he finishes it with a splash of soda water and garnishes. He then places the glass neatly on top of a cocktail napkin in front of the gentleman.

She takes her first sip, enjoying the zing of the ginger and its harmony with the spicy liqueur. It’s cool and refreshing, perfect for a hot summer day, though today it is cold and rainy; summer is still a long way off.

“It seems to banish this miserable weather, but for a moment,” murmurs the knowing voice next to her. She smiles and does not respond, but rather nibbles appreciatively at the candied ginger, a bold accompaniment to the cocktail. A Pimm’s cup is often prepared with ginger ale, lemonade, or 7-Up, though it mixes well with a number of other juices, alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages alike.

She, however, prefers it with a house made ginger syrup. She can taste the heat of chili pepper flakes on her tongue. Though the drink goes down easy, she takes her time with the beverage, savoring it in small sips. She watches the bar’s patrons and listens to their conversations. Out of the corner of her eye, she glimpses the man seated next to her gazing at her admiringly, lingering over his own drink in a similar fashion.

Soon after Pimm’s No. 1 became so in demand, James Pimm created No. 2 made with scotch and No. 3 made with brandy. Today, a total of six varieties are in existence, including rum, rye whiskey, and vodka, as Numbers 4, 5, and 6, respectively. However, Pimm’s No. 1 remains the brand’s most successful, being popular at both garden parties and summer events such as Wimbledon.

“Do you, by chance, have a pen on you?” he asks her, pulling out his billfold and extracting a twenty. He places it on the bar, after catching the eye of the bartender and nodding discreetly at the young woman seated next to him. She reaches, clearly startled, into her bag and returns with a black ballpoint pen. He jots something down onto his damp cocktail napkin, folds it, and hands it and the pen back to her before gathering his hat and jacket. Without a word, he leaves after a nod of thanks to the bartender.

Staring down at the napkin that has now become a note, she hesitates before unfolding it. She reads and smiles before finishing her Pimm’s cup.
The ice cubes at the bottom of the rocks glass crackle as the amber liquid flows over them from the bottle tipped gently overhead.

The sight and sound of whisky being poured may provoke thoughts of an elderly gentleman wearing a velvet smoking jacket, sitting alone in a high-backed red leather chair with a round glass in one hand and a cigar in the other. However, despite its connotations, a bottle of Scottish master distilling can be just as enjoyable in young adulthood as in old age.

Whisky is not a drink for the faint of heart, or the timid, but it can be the universal muse for solving all the world’s problems. It conveys an air of class, intellect, and intense contemplation. Known here in the states as scotch, in contrast to bourbon, or American whiskey, it generally tends to be an acquired taste, and follows a progression of preference for more complexity of flavor over time.

Characterized by its caramel color, aroma, and distinct taste, scotch whisky is generally made from water and malted barley mash, to which yeast has been added, and allowed to ferment, before being distilled in oak casks. For more complex flavors, the whisky can be distilled in casks formerly used to hold bourbon, rum, port or sherry.

The drink is generally served on the rocks, or neat, without ice at all. Connoisseurs of the drink would criticize the masking of the true flavors of a more expensive bottle with any supplemental additions, including soda, ice, or water. The addition of ginger ale, although delicious, is usually reserved for consumption of less expensive brands.

Whisky is labeled dependent on where it is distilled in the United Kingdom. These regions most notably include Lowland, Highland (Dalmore, Glenmorangie), Speyside (The Balvenie, Glenfiddich, The Glenlivet, The Macallan), and Islay (Lagavulin, Laphroaig). This is in contrast to American whiskey, a staple of the South, most of which is made in or around Kentucky, where limestone acts to naturally filter the water that goes into the bourbon of Jack Daniels, Jim Beam, Maker’s Mark, and Woodford Reserve.

My favorite whisky is The Glenlivet, but my most interesting experience with any of the aforementioned came while visiting Oxford University. As we ended our night at a local pub, I asked the bartender for his recommendation. He poured me a glass of Laphroaig. My first sip was overwhelmingly smoky, almost like inhaling a campfire. My second only intensified the first. I left the unfinished drink on the table as we walked out the doors to wait for the Oxford Tube.

The worst part? The taste lingers. It stays with you, in your throat, in your nostrils, and on your breath for the better part of the next few hours. Such that the first thing I did when I arrived back at my hotel room was to brush my teeth and vigorously rinse with mouthwash. The next time I’m feeling adventurous with my drink order, I’ll make sure that I only order a single.
Best British Beverages

Whether enjoying a glass of tea or a pint of beer, the Brits sure love their drinks. Naturally, as a group guided by the “when in London…” impulse, many of us fell in love with these British beverages ourselves. These are the decadent drink selections that made the top of the list.

“Granted, I’ve been at this since before some of you were born. Terrifying, right? But in the sixteen years since I’ve been legally allowed to drink, I’ve never had anything so exquisite as Crabbie’s Ginger Beer. Normally, I’m a double-Jameson-neat sort of girl, and as far as beer goes, I’ve tried them all and found them wanting, though I can give you a wonderful recipe for Guinness brownies. However, I also love ginger to the point of absurdity, and despite being relatively weak at 4.8% ABV, Crabbie’s brew captured my heart with its crisp, spicy start and warm, peppery finish. In addition, it was truly something I’d never tried before, so it won extra points for novelty.” – Tanya Spacek

“Strongbow because it A) doesn’t cost an arm and a leg like it does in Lawrence B) is literally sweet and C) has the coolest name in the history of beer/cider names. Also it’s the first drink I ordered in London.” – Kathryn Hoven

“Kopparberg mixed berry cider because its fruity taste is in juxtaposition with its beer-like bottle. And because it’s DELICIOUS.” – Nicole Nunes

“The Pimm’s Lemonade I had at Turf’s Tavern was absolutely delicious. Even when it was freezing outside, the drink still tasted fantastic. Just imagine sitting outside on a hot summer afternoon, enjoying an ice cold Pimm’s Lemonade as it chills you to the bone with gulp after gulp of fruity citrus flavored goodness. This isn’t even the best part! The finale is when you get to eat the highly alcohol soaked oranges at the end - it’s a clash of sweetness and boldness all in one bite!” – Sida Niu

“The best beverage I tried in London was the result of a bartender’s inability to understand my American accent. Instead of making me the shooter I was trying to order, he gave up asking me to repeat myself and created a fancy, dozen-ingredient concoction whose contents will forever remain a mystery to me. All I know was that it took about five minutes of careful preparation, involved lighting an orange rind on fire, impressed the British gentleman seated at the bar who commented softly “that looks bloody awesome,” and tasted like heaven in a glass!” – Sara Pyle
It is never known when you will be unexpectedly called upon to propose a toast, for a variety of different reasons, but when it does happen, you should be prepared.

For example, you could be inside the hallowed halls of Corpus Christi College at the University of Oxford, enjoying a glass of wine, when you are suddenly tasked with formally presenting a few words to unite a group with a common drinking purpose. Will you deliver the speech of a lifetime, or will you be completely inarticulate?

To aid you in your task, we have compiled the following useful references.

Brandon Rogers: “There are good ships, and wood ships, and ships that sail the sea, but the best ships are friendships, so may they always be.” —Ted Kennedy

Meaghan Moody: “Here’s to those that wish us well, and those that don’t can go to hell.”

Tanya Spacek: “The only toasts I know are too filthy to print.”

Kaitlynn Howell: “May you live as long as you want, and never want as long as you live.”

Sara Pyle: “To wine; kings it makes gods, and lesser creatures kings.” —Shakespeare

Hannah Bolton: “I realize there are things in this world better than beer...but beer makes up for the fact that I don't have any of them.”

Sida Niu: “One bottle for four of us, Thank God there's no more of us!”
Finding London Wall
Tanya Spacek

Twelve hours ago, or eighteen, or six, I can't keep track, I had never left my home continent. Now, after a blur of airport waiting lounges, break-out poker games, and tiny video airplanes crossing tiny video oceans on the seatback in front of me, I'm standing in front of a rather ordinary-looking limestone wall, gobsmacked by history. This is the history I came here to find, but there's a lot happening, happening all around me. And though there's a dizzying amount of bustling city to catch my eyes, they keep returning to this limestone brick wall. It happens to be part of the original city boundary, back when London was a Roman town called Londinium, around 200 AD.

The Wall towers over me, rising up out of the ground at a severe right angle to the tidy, well-tended plot of green lawn. Almost two millennia of weather have partially erased the marks of human hands that carefully set these stones in mortar, joining them together. Instead, the Wall now looks like an outcropping of rocks spontaneously tumbled together in a random, yet careful-looking stack. According to the small metal sign before me, this section of the Wall was accidentally preserved by being incorporated into a later building. I don't know if it was plastered over, or covered in wood panels, or if exposed stone was a hot interior design scheme even back in the Middle Ages, but the building is now gone—not a trace left. This particular piece, built by hands now turned to dust, has stood sentry, outlasting not only the civilization that built it, but endless rounds of Plague, the Little Ice Age, and WWII bombs. Undoubtedly, it will outlast me. Considering this last thought, I turn away and catch the eye of the bronze statue of Trajan. He poses with the Wall as a backdrop, pointing at something behind me. I turn to look—maybe some clever city planner used this technique to point out another cool, ancient Roman landmark. All I see, though, are shops where I can buy small double-decker buses and “I Love London” sweatshirts. Nice try, city planner. I turn back. Has the wall moved a little closer? I think jet lag’s settling in.

The wall feels alive, as if deep underground it’s grown limestone roots, feelers that stretch to connect every remaining section of the Wall throughout London. Feeling small and ridiculous, I snap pictures from every angle. What the camera won’t capture, however, is the sense of time emanating from these sections of stone. Stone that started out as sea creatures on an ocean bed, crushed by water into rock, chiseled out and joined to guard a city that quickly outgrew its original boundaries. Now the tables turn, the city carefully guards its ancient Wall, nested within London's heart.
Although I understand the merits of instilling stranger danger in our youth, once you reach a certain age, it should be disregarded (a little.) I am not advocating for you to jump into random large, white vans. I am telling you to occasionally ask strangers for recommendations while abroad. Although I suggest having somewhat of a general plan for a trip overseas, some of the best experiences result from not having a plan and taking strangers’ advice.

After our journey across the pond, we were all exhausted. However, Valery, Kelsey, Julia, Kaitlynn and I decided to immediately immerse ourselves in London. Completely plan-less, we decided to explore London by jumping on a tube and getting off at a random stop. During our tube ride, we discussed what tube stops sounded interesting. A kind London-er interjected and recommended Notting Hill Gate. We took her advice and exited the tube stop. In true London fashion, it was pouring rain. However, we did not let the weather damper our exploration.

We chose a random direction and just started walking. We noticed signs advertising a farmer’s market. We followed the signs and stumbled upon an adorable market that sold fresh fruit, vegetables, cheeses and bread. I decided to purchase a hot cup of organic apple cider from a merchant. I asked him for recommendations of “cool places” to see in London. He completely mocked my use of the word “cool” and failed to give me any recommendations. Not every stranger is nice. It’s ok though. We continued on our trek.

As we wandered around the neighborhood, we found a thrift shop with unique pieces perfect for theme parties. We also entered a convenience store named “Buy Best,” a hilarious variation on the American electronics store. However, Buy Best sold snacks and drinks instead of iPods and dishwashers. After exploring this area, we decided to put our Oyster cards to good use by hopping on a random double-decker bus. We sprinted to the top level and giggled as we took turns taking pictures of each other. As we observed London through the raindrop-covered windows, the bus stopped and the driver announced, “Please vacate the bus. End of the line.” We all looked at each other as we quickly shuffled down the stairs and off the bus.

Our random bus adventure took us to Oxford Circus, a robust shopping area perfect for retail therapy. There, we met a scarf salesman who we lovingly nicknamed “Basil.” In addition to a few laughs, we got amazing deals on scarves. We ended up visiting Basil two more times during our stay in London. We proudly found our “Scarf Man.”

A couple of days later, a stranger’s advice led to a discovery. Julia, Kaitlynn, Valery, Alaine, Kelsey, Sida and I explored Piccadilly Circus in search of souvenirs. Although the area was entertaining, we were not completely satisfied. After stopping to eat at Whole Foods, we jumped on a random bus. There, we met Ian, an incredibly friendly Brit full of advice. After asking for a recommendation, Ian sputtered off dozens of things to do/places to see (we should have taken notes.) However, one recommendation stuck out—Camden Market. He said that was THE place to experience “weird culture” and get great deals. He got off of the bus with us and kindly walked us to the tube that would take us to Camden Town. We told him he didn't need to walk us to the station, but he insisted. He was “wasting time” at work and was riding the bus for entertainment.

After emerging from the Tube Station, we were transported to the wacky world of Camden Town. We found everything from knock-off designer goods to stores dedicated to sound-activated light-up shirts. Several stores sold incredibly cheap souvenirs—pounds less than everywhere else we had shopped. We realized what a gem this crazy little place was.

I’m not telling you to completely disregard every piece of advice given to you about strangers. Some strangers are mean/bad and will mock you. However, the majority are harmless and full of advice. Ask the person next to you. You never know what you’ll find.
Laughing with Lichtenstein at the Tate Modern

Joel Coon

The stark, industrial exterior of what once was the Bankside Power Station does little to hint at the variety contained inside. Now known as the Tate Modern, this massive brick complex holds a wondrous collection of modern and contemporary artworks. I strolled into the museum on a gloomy London afternoon to observe paintings of the Surrealism movement as well as the giant color-field paintings of Mark Rothko. After walking and gawking for a few minutes, I was delighted to find that the Tate had curated a Roy Lichtenstein retrospective as one of this spring’s temporary exhibitions. Lichtenstein’s fame as a Pop artist is probably second only to Andy Warhol, with both artists hitting their creative stride in the early 1960s. Pop Art slowly took form throughout the 1950s and became the in vogue artistic movement of the following decade. No longer was the artist’s hand or even personal involvement necessary to make a painting. The movement presented commodity logos, objects, and techniques as subjects of high art. The Pop Art “painting” sourced much of its imagery from consumer and advertising culture; for instance, a painting of a repeating can of Campbell’s Soup would have made a great work of art in 1962.

But enough background! The Tate’s Lichtenstein retrospective is entertaining eye candy to even those who despise art history. Imagine a vibrant scene from a comic book. Now place that image on a large canvas upon a pretentious art gallery wall. As a final mental step, add polka dots all over the picture. You currently have a pretty good idea of Lichtenstein’s painting style. His signature aesthetic consists of bold, saturated colors and tiny dots speckled over the image and his subjects range from sappy comic strip characters with overdramatic thought bubbles (i.e. “I don’t care! I’d rather sink than call Brad for help!” in 1962’s Drowning Girl) to smorgasbords of pure colors and patterns. In between these extremes, Lichtenstein also liked to poke fun at previous artistic movements and painters by mimicking their styles in a cartoon-like fashion.

As I perused the thirteen rooms of the exhibition, I was surprised by the layers of engagement offered by these seemingly silly paintings. On a superficial level of pure visual entertainment, Lichtenstein’s paintings were clouds of confetti on the wall—like a sugary and decorated birthday cake for hungry eyes. Many people, regardless of age, would probably smile at the goofy pictures without needing to know anything about their creation. But I was also amazed by deeper layers of social commentary. Lichtenstein enlarges cheesy comic strip characters and presents them in extreme situations of despair and infatuation (women) or action and bravado (men). These comic-derived paintings are meant as comical representations of outdated gender identities. Other images imitate famous paintings, such as those of Jackson Pollock and Piet Mondrian, and appear as wry caricatures of the original work. In these pictures, Lichtenstein offers a visual laugh at the tradition of intense personal expression and style in the history of painting.

It was this paradox that I found so interesting: Lichtenstein’s painting style is uniquely his in its humor and appropriation of “high” and “low” art influences, while simultaneously giggling at the thought of painting as a means for revealing one’s personality. His artistic identity is unique because it questions having any kind of identity at all, whether an artist or not. The retrospective caused many questions to bubble up in my brain, such as: to what extent are our actions and personalities derivative of mass-entertainment culture? Are artworks really any different from other commodity items? Are the works that a museum chooses to display just advertising billboards for its continued existence? I probably will not ever find answers for these, but Lichtenstein managed to tickle them into my head with his funny pictures. I left the Tate Modern with a newfound appreciation for Lichtenstein’s Pop imagery, the paintings having fed my eyes and head.
**Plot**

**ONE MAN, TWO GUVNORS**

Theatre Royal Haymarket
Haymarket, London

Monday 18-March-2013  7:30
Royal Circle  B22

Ticket Price £28.50
Restoration Levy/Booking Fee £1.00

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**Cardiff bus**

Drw 713 Route 6
Bus 604 Jnry 164
Ticket No 2569

Thu, 21 Mar 13 13:54

Adult Single £1.70

Porth Teigr To
Hilton/New Theatre

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**Doctor Who Experience**

Adult - Collection

Discovery Quay
Heol Porth Teigr
Butetown
Cardiff
CF10 4GA

CrowdSurge COBO (DWE Box)
Thursday 21 Mar 2013

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**Prince of Wales Theatre**

Coventry St, London, W1D 6AS
0844 482 5115
Theatre and Bars open 30 minutes prior to performance

Kaitlynn Howell

**The Book of Mormon**

Parental Advisory: Explicit Language
Performance starts at 2:30 PM
Saturday 23-March-2013
Stalls J36

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**St Patrick’s Day Parade**

Mayor of London presents
In preparing for the trip with my classmates the resounding sentiment was excitement at the prospect of “getting lost” in the city. “Get lost” seemed to be higher up on everyone’s “to-do list” than “eat food” or “stay alive.” It seemed strange to me (mostly because nothing is higher up on my list than “eat food”) but I figured I didn’t have a problem with the infatuation with “getting lost.” Even a boring science person like myself understands the figurative implications of the phrase. I have a time or two “gotten lost” in a great book and can infer (from Jane Austin books, not from personal experience) what it would be like to “get lost” in someone’s eyes. I can relate to the longing to escape the world for a moment and just lose yourself in something. So I accepted the wistful echoes of my classmates without ascribing to their plan to intentionally “get lost.”

By the way I chose to navigate the city you would have guessed otherwise, however. My unwavering ambition to walk the city as a Londoner hiding all signs of my lowly position as a tourist was rather impressive really. Not once did I find myself admitting defeat and opening my map. And this plan worked well for me… until the day I decided to visit museums on my own.

At this point I would just like to say that everyone who claimed they wanted to “get lost” clearly have not been legitimately lost. Symbolically “getting lost” I understand, actual having-no-idea-where-you-are-and-how-to-get-where-you’re-going type of lost I have no desire to do.

At the beginning I was content in not knowing where I was. I wandered in and out of shops practically skipping from street to street all the while thinking how proud my classmates would be of me brilliantly achieving their highly revered mission of “getting lost.” About the time a half-pence-sized blister appeared on my foot, I descended into a state of exhaustion, despair, and anxiety. The pigeons that already annoyed me (they are vectors of disease) seemed to be swarming at me from all angles like a scene from the horror film *The Birds*. Aside from miraculously not getting punched by one of the innocent victims I swatted while practicing the best way to hold my umbrella, the magic of being lost was gone as I discovered that I had in fact actually gotten myself lost.

I suppose now is where I give credit to those classmates and their encouragement of “getting lost.” While it wasn’t quite as charming or as dreamy as their longing voices made it seem, actually getting lost was one of the best things to happen to me on this trip. I managed to find my way back, promptly ordered tea like the good Brit I was trying to be, and reflected on my Odyssey-like journey. With the thoughts of impeding graduation often plaguing me as a person who resists change, I felt for the first time that I could navigate the unknown that is next year. If I can find my way while fending off demons (pigeons) and overcoming obstacles (the welt on my foot), I can find my way through this transition into post-grad life with ease. I have always known that my decisions about the future would turn out okay, but rarely did I feel like they would turn out okay until after being truly, terribly, horribly lost. Therefore my views on getting disoriented have aligned with my classmates’ as I am most excited to continue to “get lost.”
Afternoon Tea
Julia Chasen

Legend has it that one of Queen Victoria’s ladies in waiting, the Duchess of Bedford, created afternoon tea to combat her hunger between the noontime meal and dinner. While the practice began with her servants sneaking her food, it soon evolved into a small afternoon meal where friends chat and dine on sandwiches, cakes, and tea. Afternoon tea quickly caught on and is now commonplace throughout England.

According to the menu at The Orangery at Kensington Palace, “afternoon tea is one of the most special times of the day. [It’s a]n occasion one looks forward to with great anticipation and high expectations for a perfect experience.” Personally, I think this definition accurately summed up my afternoon tea experience.

Four of us went to tea with extraordinarily high expectations. Going to afternoon tea was at the top of our “London bucket list,” and I didn’t plan on leaving London until I had accomplished it. We picked a day to go to tea at The Orangery, and when that day came, it was all we could think or talk about.

Our plan was to visit Kensington Palace and then go to tea sometime that afternoon. After visiting Kensington Palace (mostly the gift shop), we were ready for our next stop. In our excitement, we showed up for tea shortly after 1:00 p.m., only to be told that afternoon tea doesn’t start until 2:00 p.m. It was clearly a rookie mistake.

We decided to head back to Kensington Palace and kill some time by catching up on writing in our journals (with no offense meant to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge—a.k.a. Will and Kate—who made the palace their official London residence). We headed back to The Orangery at 2:00 p.m., hungrier than we were before and with a greater level of anticipation.

We were seated immediately and presented with a menu and a variety of different options for teas. After opting for the “English Orangery Afternoon Tea,” we waited. Our tea arrived shortly and we sampled the different varieties we each ordered.

Afternoon tea usually has the connotation of being proper and fancy. Our tea experience was definitely nice, but it differed from the traditional experience in a few ways. Our tea experience involved much more giggling and picture taking. As we shared stories and reflected on some of the strange experiences we had and the interesting people we had met earlier in the week, accents (or our impressions of accents at least) somehow made their way into The Orangery. The giggling subsided once we received our food, but the conversation continued.

Our food arrived on a tower with three different tiers, each containing a different course. The first tier held an assortment of sandwiches. The surprising consensus for our favorite was the smoked salmon and cream cheese sandwich. On the second tier, there were currant scones and orange scented scones, which were served with clotted cream and strawberry jam. The highest tier held an assortment of tea pastries, including teacake, a mini pineapple upside down cake, a dark chocolate pastry, and a passion fruit tart.

While we ate, we discussed our plans for the rest of the day: the Natural History Museum, Phantom of the Opera, and the KU game. We definitely weren’t expecting to come out of our afternoon tea experience full (in fact, we had plans to go to our favorite cookie place, Ben’s Cookies, after), but we did. Afternoon tea surpassed our high expectations, and we collectively decided that it truly was the most special part of our day.
Where Can I Find Some Kebabs?

Sida Niu

Good food can define some people’s entire travel experience. I am one of those people, and I was determined to seek out the best food in London. However, it's important to know that I am a huge carnivore, and I like to get the biggest bang for my buck. I’m not the type of guy who is into the whole fancy-shmancy nice sit-down restaurant; I prefer the hole-in-the-wall restaurant that all the locals love. After talking to some friends who previously studied abroad in London, I came to the conclusion that I absolutely had to get a late night kebab, which I was told was an “epic flavorful meaty explosion” that would leave my taste buds begging for more.

During the first couple of days in London, I kept my eyes peeled for kebab shops and stands everywhere we went. I was sorely disappointed when I failed to locate even a single kebab source. As luck would have it though, while coming home on the third night from the Hippodrome Casino (which financed my 4th day in London), our cab driver took us by Bosphorus Kebabs, which he said was one of the most famous and delicious kebab restaurants in London. Its owners are originally from Turkey, and it is one of the oldest restaurants in South Kensington. Bosphorus has been serving high quality, juicy fresh kebabs since 1974! “This is the place I will finally get my kebabs,” I said to myself, as I made a mental note of the restaurant’s location. Nothing could have prepared me for what was to come.

I woke up the next morning and felt like a little kid on Christmas. The second Brandon sat up in bed I told him we would be getting kebabs for lunch. The short trek through South Kensington to Bosphorus Kebab seemed like an eternity as my tongue and lips tingled with excitement. When Brandon and I finally saw the Bosphorus Kebab sign, it was as if we reached an oasis in a dry, hot desert. We were greeted with the smell of juicy marinated chicken and lamb meat the second we opened the door. After we browsed through their menu (which was littered with delicious sounding meals, including Lamb Shish, Spicy Kofte, Saddle Chops, Chicken Shish, and Chicken Kebab), I finally decided on the Extra Large Doner Kebab.

What I received was a heaping plate the size of a cafeteria tray that was piled high with minced lamb carved in thin slices. It was served with a hearty helping of cucumber sauce, fresh salad, chili sauce and pita bread. As I took in bite after bite, there really were no better words to describe what was happening in my mouth other than an “epic flavorful meaty explosion.” While Brandon was enjoying his majestic Combo Kebab, we noticed all the notecards plastering the walls of the restaurant from people all over the world praising Bosphorus for their delicious kebabs. While I am unsure of when I will be back in London again, I do know one thing for sure – Bosphorus Kebab will soon have a postcard from Kansas, USA displayed proudly on one of its walls.
Flying the Nest
Kelsey Carothers

Exploring a foreign city on your own is an irreplaceable experience that everyone should have the opportunity to do. Not having to worry about the time, final destination, or when to break for food. London was the perfect city to traverse alone with the easy access to various modes of transportation. Having the ability to walk, ride a double-decker bus, or take the tube wherever I wanted to go made my travels easier and less stressful. I was able to take breaks whenever I needed them, and I was able to truly enjoy myself without having to worry about keeping to a schedule or doing what the group wanted to do. This experience was different from any other I had experienced. Growing up in a family that loved to travel took me to places like Athens, Paris, and India in addition to numerous destinations in the U.S. My family trips were always packed to the brim with trips to historic sites, museums, famous restaurants, etc. There was barely any time to relax and just enjoy our time abroad.

I enjoy going through museums at my own pace, spending more time on what interests me. On my own in London, I was able to use this technique to my advantage in seeing and enjoying all that I wanted to see on my trip. Walking through places like the Victoria and Albert Museum or the National Gallery can be quite overwhelming if trying to look at every piece. However, I was able to hone in on the pieces that interested me most and though I still made a point to look at every piece in the museum, I was able to maximize my time in London and spend more time with pieces I truly love. You never really notice all the things you would otherwise miss when you rush through a museum with a group. I went to the National Gallery with a small group early in our trip where we were able to see what I thought at the time was a pretty good portion of the galleries. However, I realized when I returned by myself toward the end of our trip that we didn't even experience half the museum, let alone the rooms that interested me.

Some experiences we had in London were made memorable because of the people we were with and the group atmosphere. However, I will also remember London as the first time I spent alone wandering through the great museums of the city. It was a truly liberating feeling to walk through the streets and museums of London and know that I was completely free of any restrictions that normally reign over me when I travel with my family. London is unlike other cities I've experienced because I felt completely at ease on my own. It was a wonderful place to "spread my wings" and "leave the nest" for the first time.
The Brits have a strong ability to accept change. Rich with a vast history of revolution and transformation, from medieval plagues to industrial famines, the English have a story that much embodies the, albeit overused and often misconstrued, phrase Keep Calm and Carry On. With a pinch of dark humor thrown into the tried and true expression, the British have got it right when it comes to moving on in turmoil.

I am a creature of habit. I don't particularly like change when it comes to school or relationships; when things are good I like to think they'll stay that way, and when they're bad, I keep them that way. London makes me want to grow, to write and be myself. I find I don't take myself seriously enough, but being here I feel like I finally can. I believe it's the day we venture to Oxford that I see the need for change. I have been holding on to many things, things that have happened to me, things I can't let go of. The English inspire me to do something I told myself I would never do. I'm going to bob my hair.

I don't know why I did it. I guess I mean I don't know what came over me or gave me the idea. I can be impulsive at times, but this seems to make perfect sense in the grand scheme of things. I want to be who I am, not who I look like. I think in our culture we define ourselves by our hair in more ways than we realize. I held onto my hair like I held onto my bad experiences in a way that I feel the Brits would not, in my experience. So, I chopped it off.

The man who cut my hair down in Soho spoke broken English and did little to reassure my vocalized nerves, but told me one thing that mattered the most—“it seems like you're doing this for the right reasons.” I told him my then-boyfriend had instructed me never to cut my hair short, and he countered that it is my hair and my head that I am wearing, not anyone else's. I am myself, no one else's.

London taught me to just go with it. What is it, exactly? Not getting upset at life. Letting bad situations become funny. Talking with people I may have never been lucky enough to meet had I not gone on this trip. Not crying when I chopped my hair off because my hair is not my identity, and I know that now. I can handle life as it comes at me and not let these things weigh me down. I can do London.
I adore musicals. I attend them as frequently as possible, and musical soundtracks make up the majority of the music I listen to. I love the way stories are told through song, and the way humor and pop culture are cleverly woven into the lyrics.

My first brush with Matt Stone and Trey Parker's The Book of Mormon was Andrew Rannell's performance of “I Believe” at the 2011 Tony Awards. It was instant love. I bought the CD, memorized every word, and anxiously awaited the day that I would see it onstage; so you can imagine my extreme joy when I saw that The Book of Mormon was in previews in London. And so the quest began.

On Tuesday night, we had a group dinner at Wagamama's and then three of us decided to try for the returns line at The Book of Mormon. The performance was already sold out, but there is a “returns queue” to wait in the hopes that someone will return their ticket or not show up, making a ticket available for purchase. The man who came to stand behind us remarked that he had never before seen a returns queue so long. No one ended up returning any tickets, so the entire queue walked away empty-handed.

Friday morning, Valery and I returned to Prince of Wales Theater to see about entering the lottery. Many musicals in America have lotteries also, wherein the theater drastically discounts about twenty tickets that are given based on a raffle. The woman in the box office told us to come back that night at 5:00 to enter. We arrived just on time, each put our names in for two tickets, and then commenced waiting for the 5:30 drawing. Anticipation built as more and more people entered, then huddled in the rain around the theater steps. Finally 5:30 rolled around and each of the winners celebrated in turn as they were called. Most of these winners shouted, squealed, and expressed their extreme excitement aloud. But one winner was from London. In true British fashion, he merely said something like “Alright,” and the whole crowd chuckled at his stereotypically British reaction. Then came time for the last ticket drawing. The winner's name was announced…and there was no reply. THREE more times names were drawn, revealing lottery winners who hadn't stayed to hear the results. So Valery and I were really
thinking we might stand a chance. But then another name was drawn, and the lucky person was actually there to claim it. The crowd dissipated, and we started to walk away when I heard an exaggerated “Oh My God!” I turned around to look at the American-accent imposter, who looked back with a theatrically sheepish expression. He was delighted to learn that we were American and from Kansas because he loves The Wizard of Oz. He gave me an autograph, and when I said it’d be good to have when he made it big someday, he squealed in excitement and replied, “That’s a real compliment, because everything is big in America!” We parted ways with hugs and promises of Facebook friendship.

After our snowy Portobello Road Market adventure we got back to the hotel just before noon, and those who ran the lottery had said Friday that the Saturday matinee lottery would be at 12:30. So I decided to try to make it one more time. Glances at the time while riding the Tube told me making it by 12:30 would be a very close call. As soon as the doors opened at the Leicester Square stop, I bolted for the theater. I used the fast lane to run up the escalators, I sprinted up the exit stairs, and I tore across Leicester Square. All this cardio was to no avail, however, when I arrived at the theater to find the lottery had already ended. Crushed, and exhausted, I entered the box office to see if by any chance there were any tickets left. The woman told me that there were single tickets available! These were premium seats, and therefore the most expensive. But I had put in so much effort trying to see the show, I felt it was worth the expense and I handed her my card. I went and ate some lunch to pass the time before the matinee. I came back to the theater and felt the anticipation and excitement of a child awaiting Christmas morning as I sat in my seat and waited for the curtain to open.

The show was absolutely incredible. The dance numbers were phenomenal, the sets so detailed, and the songs just as wonderful as I'd hoped they'd be live. One of my favorite aspects of getting to see The Book of Mormon in London as opposed to America was listening to the British actors imitate American accents. I'm sure the British audience members thought these accents spot-on, the way I always think our British accents sound fairly realistic. But you could definitely hear that they were not American, and were struggling to get the dialect. Apart from the accents, everything about the show was amazing. I am so delighted that I was finally able to see the musical I'd been obsessing over since the 2011 Tony's. There is a line in one of the songs that says “I know my mission will be something incredible,” and despite all my struggles trying to get there, my mission to see this show turned out to be exactly that.
JOSEPH LINCOLN HATCH
WHOSE LIFE WAS BASICALLY BILLY ELLIOT

‘THE BEST SHOW ON THE LONDON STAGE’
★★★★★★
The Search for My Inner Musical Lover
Nicole Nunes

I’ve never been much of a musical person. I don’t hate them. I have just never been particularly interested in performances that randomly break into song. However, I decided to try and find my inner musical lover during my time in London. Spoiler alert: I was unsuccessful.

A group of us journeyed to TKTS in Leicester Square for discounted theater tickets. When we found nothing appealing, Julia suggested we venture to the “Phantom of the Opera” box office. I knew nothing about the story line, but I kept an open mind. I was in London, a city of cultured, fabulous people. Of course I would go to “Phantom of the Opera.” It doesn’t get more posh than the opera, right? I paid 36 pounds for my ticket. I had no idea what I had just gotten myself into.

Showtime approached, so Julia and I headed to the theater that evening. The theater itself was small but ornate. Very luxurious for such a small venue. The performance began, and I was completely lost soon after. First of all, the whole concept of a phantom was bizarre. What? A phantom? With a lair? That makes PERFECT sense. And he was haunting the opera, which inhibited the performance from taking place. Ok, if there is a phantom messing up your performance, YOU SWITCH VENUES. I’m sure that is Performance 101, people.

After I jumped the hurdle of accepting the phantom’s existence, I had to mentally process how dramatic these people were. Like come ON. They all just needed to drink some chamomile tea and calm down. And the singing! Yes, I knew it was a musical, but they all sang in high-pitched voices for a large chunk of the performance. And even better, I probably understood approximately 8% of what they sang, due to the extremely high pitches. In addition to the “musical-ness” of the whole ordeal, I could not handle Christine. I feel like the best word to describe her is floppy. She was totally helpless and dependent on men. That girl needed to pull herself together. Where were her close friends to organize a much-needed girls’ night out?

The performance ended, and to be perfectly honest, I couldn’t tell whether Christine chose the phantom or Raoul. I was happy the musical was over and that I was returning to a world free of random high-pitched musical numbers.

Despite my unsuccessful quest to find my inner musical lover, I am still glad I saw “Phantom of the Opera” in London. I experienced the musical in one of the most culturally stimulating cities on the planet. But if anyone knows Christine’s contact info, let me know. I would be more than willing to plan a fantastic (phantom-free) girls’ night, and she is more than welcome to join. As long as she doesn’t sing.
As a person who has had music lessons since the age of 3, I have a great interest in music and at one time considered majoring in Music. I aspired to be a female conductress with a minor in piano or flute performance. When I found out that the Royal Academy of Music Museum and the Handel House Museum were in London, I could not pass up the opportunity to visit the museums. At the museums, I had the privilege of playing on the different pianos and harpsichords, testing out the feel and sound of each one. These instruments once belonged to great composers such as Haydn, Handel, Chopin, Beethoven, and Mozart. It made me feel like a little girl in a candy store.

Before setting foot in London, I was sure of one thing— I would watch at least one musical. In the end, however, I had the privilege of watching FOUR musicals! Going to four musicals cost me £88; which in my opinion was a great bargain. I chose each musical with care as I knew my time in London was limited. Phantom of the Opera made the cut as I grew up listening to the songs, learning the pieces, and writing musical arrangements for the high school choir. Wicked was the next show to pass the test because five years ago, I wrote musical arrangements for a school musical production which adapted the lyrics to “Loathing” and I had longed to watch the original production ever since. Matilda and A Chorus Line rounded out my musical program as I wanted to extend my musical repertoire.

If I could give awards to the musicals, this is what the list would look like:

Best Set: Matilda & Phantom of the Opera
Best Choreography: A Chorus Line
Best Song: “Loathing” Wicked (yes, I am biased)
Best Actor: Ben Freeman, Wicked
Best Actress: Eleanor Worthington Cox, Matilda

I loved all of the musicals I saw while in London but— I wonder how many more musicals I could have watched if we had one more week…

More Royal Albert Hall
Fun Facts

1. To fundraise for the construction of the Royal Albert Hall, 1300 seats were sold privately for £100/seat.

2. Two years ago, a 5-seat box sold for £1.3million.

3. The Queen has a special entrance, and when she is at the Hall, the chairs in her box are replaced with special gentlemen and ladies chairs.

4. The acoustics were initially very bad, and it took 98 years for them to solve the problem. How? By adding glass plates which look like mushrooms below the dome.
This urban sound collage is an audio record of my experience in London. For better and worse, I am generally too lazy to take many pictures while traveling. It was easier and more fun for me to record moments of sound along the way. I've sifted through my recordings to pick out my favorite moments and have organized them in a roughly chronological manner. The collage includes the following sounds: the Buckingham Palace Changing of the Guard, St. Patrick's Day parade marching bands, church bells, antique clock chimes, a street beat box performer, museum installations, and the futuristic sounds of an underground tube ride. I have also sprinkled in single words with which others have used to describe the city. Overall, this is meant as an abstract and fun aural representation of London.
A Visit to BFI Southbank
Andrew Genova

My trip to the British Film Institute allowed me to watch one of the rarer episodes of an early BBC television documentary series, Monitor. Ken Russell's The Lonely Shore is a hilarious glimpse into how we view past cultures. By transposing modern methods of archeology onto the artifacts of present day (c. 1962), The Lonely Shore asks just how absurd some of the conclusions we draw about past cultures could be if applied to our own culture without any proper context. The film doesn’t necessarily aim for biting critical satire of the study of anthropology but uses this lens to reveal some of the faults and absurdity of human behavior.

Mankind has died out in Britain (whether or not mankind has survived elsewhere is unmentioned) and the artifacts of man have been left scattered on the desolate beaches. An entire row of about twenty chairs in all different shapes and sizes litter the sand, while the narrator dryly observes that man was unable to decide an aesthetic choice for “chair” and was obsessed with imitating and rehashing himself. They examine a shrine to the god Dog, which is actually someone’s fireplace with their collection of ceramic dogs all over it, and a shrine to an angry machine god (actually a car) which represents both man’s love and hatred for machines because of the car’s mix of aesthetic beauty and ugliness. More artifacts include a hula girl on the beach which perplexes the narrator because of its seemingly irrelevant purpose as a kitsch object—not art and not useful. A conclusion consistently drawn is that mankind is so obsessed with pretense that cheap imitation, mass manufactured products, and image have become man’s primary concern.

On first glance, the BFI building looked like it was just a cut above suburban multiplex. It had clean and empty open spaces (a bit like the beaches of The Lonely Shore), sleek black granite, and sweeping gray walls. The actual film archives are stored miles outside London in closed-for-tour facilities. They downplay their importance to film restoration and preservation, but step into their shop or either of their libraries and the place becomes a fantasy land for film lovers. I spent nearly an hour and half in their Mediateque video library watching oddball footage like Screaming Lord Sutch’s music video for “Jack the Ripper,” and experimental art films from darkly feminist film Do You Love Me, Darling? to several abstract color art pieces known as the Colour Capers. They had incredibly famous British feature length films to watch like David Lean’s Brief Encounter and Hammer Horror’s Dracula (unfortunately not the version with the restored scene where Christopher Lee rips his face off when he’s disintegrating in the sunlight).

The reading library was small, but all three shelved walls were packed from floor to ceiling with books on film theory, ranging from genre to production. I probably could have spent my entire week there. In the brief hour I sat reading in the library, I found an interview with science fiction writer Nigel Kneale about his time writing the Quatermass serials in the 1950s and 60s. Although his first three Quatermass serials (and the Hammer film remakes) are considered British science fiction classics now, it was comforting to hear him talk down on the cultishness of the sci-fi genre.

I doubt the BFI would make any top sights lists for London as it lacked some of the panache of the London museum staples, but as a lover of film the BFI was essential.
Beware the pigeon gangs of Oxford:

PLEASE CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND YOU, TO AVOID PIGEONS ENTERING THE BUILDING. THANKYOU.

"What, this little guy? Harmless."

“Oh. Hellooo.”
“He made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun.”

I could not help but recall these lines and many others from Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, as I emulated her fictional footsteps through London, beginning in Dean’s Yard and ending on Bond Street. I first read *Mrs. Dalloway* in Bavaria, of all places, while I attended a language program for a semester. I was feeling homesick and ambivalent about taking time off from school to travel, and a good friend recommended the novel to me, insisting, “You need to read this book. Everything. It just makes sense of everything.” I was doubtful and shelved the novel away on that “oh, when I have time” list. However, one day while I was perusing the public library’s extremely limited section of English language novels, there she was daring me to pick up and read. My friend was right. Everything. Everything did make sense, so much so that one of my main travel objectives while in London was to walk the Mrs. Dalloway walk. We began at Dean’s Yard, trying to fathom that people (the wealthy, in the extreme) can live just blocks away from Westminster and the houses of parliament. As we headed to “Clarissa’s home,” supposedly located on either Great College Street or Barton Street, the noise of the traffic and crowds of tourists died away.

Few people traversed these roads, except for the occasional mother pushing a pram or old man walking his small dog. We paused for a moment, surveying the lovely town homes, trying to envision Clarissa emerging into the mid-June sunlight on her quest to buy the flowers herself. We continued along our course, weaving our way through busy streets until we reached St. James’s Park by turning right at Queen Anne’s gate and crossing Birdcage Walk. How wonderful it was to emerge through a small gate from a narrow road surrounded by the city landscape into a resplendent park filled with greenery and fountains. The sun came out as we ambled slowly across the blue bridge; it brought to mind Clarissa standing, “for a moment, looking at the omnibuses,” feeling it was “very, very dangerous to live even one day” and refusing to “say of herself, I am this, I am that.” We too watched the omnibuses pass for a moment and then headed toward Old and New Bond Street and its luxuriance. Here, Mrs. Dalloway buys her flowers from the “button-faced” Miss Pym; however, the shops we saw were more along the lines of Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, and Alexander McQueen. I laughed a little, imagining Clarissa donning the bodycon dress and stilettos of a mannequin in one of the shop’s windows instead of her silver-green mermaid gown. Obviously times have changed. Nearing the end of our walk, just before we turned off New Bond Street, we serendipitously happened upon a flower stand; not quite the same as Miss Pym’s, but still, they bought the flowers themselves.
So chances are you've been to a museum or two in your life. And you probably know that there are a number of unsaid rules that go along with visiting a museum. Rules like: be quiet, be courteous to others, don't stand in front of one thing for an hour and block everyone else's view with your big head, and so on. But one rule, a major rule, that is said, is — "Please DO NOT TOUCH items on display." This is the most important rule, and it's not to be forgotten. Positioned around nearly every display is some sort of placard or sign to remind everyone how important it is to follow the "do not touch" rule. It's all very simple – look, but don't touch.

Now, I don't consider myself the rebellious type. I once got a speeding ticket for going 70mph in a 55mph zone, so you could say I'm a hardened criminal by now, but most would agree that I've still got a ways to go before I would ever be accepted on the delinquent scene. Other than that I've got a clean record and a decent head on my shoulders. So, you'd think I'd be able to follow the one rule of every museum, right? Well, the problem with that is, you didn't see the glorious table that I saw. This little beauty was just sitting there, no glass case protecting it, calling out to me – 'go ahead, touch me, I'm so smooth and beautifully handcrafted.' I stared at it in awe. I felt like a fly mesmerized by the glow of deadly bug zapper. I can appreciate a good piece of woodwork-ing when I see it, because believe it or not, I consider woodworking a hobby of mine. I can't even explain it or begin to describe how it was made, but I knew it was awesome and took a heck of a lot of skill to create. It was taunting me, making me wish I had been the one to craft it or at least the money to commission it for myself. I was overcome by curiosity. So, I reached out and I touched it. It was smooth, the plies were expertly pressed and I swore the world around me went away for that moment we were together.

You know that saying about curiosity and the cat? It's true. I didn't actually die, but as soon as I heard that voice over my shoulder and saw another person's arm reaching out toward mine, it sure felt like something had gone terribly wrong. I pulled my hand away quickly as the voice spoke in a calm British accent, "Please do not touch the items. As you can see, the table already is damaged from people touching it." I was completely stunned. I hadn't even realized what I'd done. I started bumbling like an idiot and blurted out, "Oh my gosh, I'm so sorry. I don't know what I was thinking, sorry." But I did know what I was thinking; that table was awesome and I wanted to touch it, so I did. The thought that "oh, I probably shouldn't touch this, it's in a museum" was never even close to crossing my mind. The crafty museum directors had obviously placed that woman perfectly to catch fools like me. I hadn't even seen her when I entered the room, and she honestly scared me when I heard her voice creeping up behind me.

After I'd been caught, I was quite flustered. All I remember of the next ten minutes was thinking about how to get out of that room without having to walk past the
table or the watchwoman who had caught me in the act. Though I made it out alive, the only thing I escaped with was a wild story and a bruised ego.

But wait folks, that's not all! Like a bad infomercial, all you have to do is wait five minutes for another deal to come along. I had the joy of waiting about a day or so before my next bit of bad luck with museums came along. No, I didn't touch anything this time or break an antique vase or accidentally steal something from the gift shop. I just kind of, sort of fell asleep for a couple seconds. Not a big deal. And maybe it's not as entertaining as touching a table, but I'll try to make the story as enjoyable as possible.

You can't blame me this time. The morning of this incident was also the morning that the group took a nice long stroll from our hotel in Kensington, through the city to the Houses of Parliament, Big Ben, and Westminster Abbey, and then back over to St. James Park and the Mall where we finished at Buckingham Palace. After that we wandered over to watch part of the St. Patrick's Day parade, then walked to an Irish pub for some lunch and a Guinness, and then made our way back to Trafalgar Square. So, by the time I found myself standing in front of a ten-foot painting at the National Gallery, I was a little bit worn out. How could I help it that my eyelids felt as heavy as all the gold plated statues I had seen around the city? My eyes were begging to be closed, and no matter how hard I tried, I just couldn't keep them open. I let them shut and about four seconds later I jolted awake and looked around to make sure no one had noticed. The coast seemed clear, so I moved right along to the next masterpiece. But then, almost like the Snorlax in one of my favorite childhood games, a wild bench appeared. To me, it looked comfiest bench I'd ever seen, so I proceeded to place myself near the end, right next to an older man who seemed quite uninterested in the whole museum experience.

Sitting down was a bad idea though, because once again my eyes pulled themselves shut, and this time I let them stay. They were only closed for about fifteen seconds, but I felt the room getting quiet and myself on the verge of a deep slumber. This time, when I opened my eyes I realized someone had seen me, a fellow London Reviewer. So I tried to play it off like nothing happened as I stood up, shrugging it all away and nonchalantly saying, “Man, I'm tired.” But those fifteen seconds that I did let my eyes close were worth it. I don't think it's that uncommon for people to fall asleep in a museum though, because I definitely saw at least five 2-7 year old children fast asleep in their mother's or father's arms, and I'm only a little bit older than that.

I've since decided that I should probably take a break from museums for a while, to build my immunities back up. I certainly saw enough historic artifacts in my eight days in London to keep me satisfied for a good while. I hope I haven't discouraged anyone from visiting a few museums because of my own misfortune. If nothing else, at least these stories can serve as a reminder of exactly what not to do next time you enter the jungle that is the museum.
With the amount of history to be found in London, it’s no wonder the city seems to have a million museums in which to house it. If I’m counting correctly, I visited nine in the week we were there. And although I liked some more than others, they were all certainly thought-provoking. These are just two of my museum experiences and subsequent reflections.

The British Museum houses some of the world’s most amazing objects – the Rosetta Stone, a significant portion of the Parthenon, and the Sphinx’s beard to name a few – but to me, the most amazing part of it are the tables scattered throughout the museum, each staffed by an expert, where you are invited to actually hold history in your hands. It was interesting to me how I was the only one in a crowded gallery not only visiting the table, but ecstatic about its existence, while everyone around me continued to observe the gallery’s other objects from a distance, separated by display cases. At the table, I was able to hold an early human flint tool, a 4,000-year-old piece of clay from a temple that was inscribed with a prayer in cuneiform, an alabaster pot used by Egyptian pharaohs to hold eyeliner, and a hand-carved tile from a centuries-old mosque. While holding each object, I could picture all the people who created, used, and touched them before me and it was one of the coolest things I’ve ever been able to do. Most museums force you into having a removed, indirect interaction with art, but this opportunity to have direct, hands-on contact with not only art, but ancient history, was a much more satisfying and powerful experience. It made me think a lot about whether the framing and casing of museum art that’s done in order to shield and protect it outweighs the cost of allowing a more real, personal examination and education of art. Either way, more museums should do this.

While the Tate Modern had many lovely exhibits, some of them may have been a little too “modern” for my tastes. One particular moment pretty accurately summed up my feelings about some of the more abstract pieces. I was in one of the galleries where a bunch of people were crowded around a piece, oohing, aahing, and snapping pictures. As I got closer, I noticed the exhibit was a piece of mirrored glass hung on the wall. Fearing I was missing out on some hidden meaning, I started reading the description on the exhibit’s placard. As soon as I read the words “forces you to confront yourself,” I’ll admit my eyes did a bit of a skeptical roll. A British man reading it next to me seemed to come to a similar conclusion, as he suddenly (and very loudly) exclaimed, “It’s just a bloody mirror!” This experience was actually particularly interesting to me because during the trip I was working on a paper about Pierre Bourdieu’s essay “The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure.” In it, Bourdieu tries to determine what gives an artwork its value, and this “bloody mirror” exhibit made me think about just that – is it really the quality of the piece or is it the name of the artist? The world may never know, but at least it gave me some philosophical food for thought (as well as some ideas for my paper) on a snowy London day.
QR Code: Panorama shot from atop Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Oxford

http://photosynth.net/view.aspx?cid=9a1f0851-9b4a-49f7-9394-f5d24e20ce27&
Public Announcement

to you American tourists:

Starbucks is not to be consumed
Take it out into the Lobby

Maps are £1
Do not steal the maps
They are not free

Taking photos of Kate Middleton is prohibited
We saw you. We know.

We saw you. We know.
Overheard in Heathrow:
“What are you taking?”
“Ecstasy. No, I didn’t bring enough to share. Actually, yes I did. But I took it all on the plane. Nine-day rave.”
“That’s a lot of glowsticks.”

Overheard in Guildhall Gallery:
Guard: “Andrew Lloyd Weber donated some of the best paintings here.”
Patron: “Does that mean I have to forgive him for ‘Cats?”

In Strathmore Grange lobby:
Classmate: “Are you going on the pub crawl tomorrow?”
Me: “I’ve been on a pub crawl for the last fifteen years. I’m going to a museum.”

Overheard on the Tube:
“Bless you, Virgin Wi-fi.”

Overheard outside the George Inn:
“And here’s the Starbucks where Chaucer and Shakespeare hung out...”

Overheard on Portobello Road:
Vendor: “I only sell pure Baltic amber. Don’t trust those Russians across the street.”

Overheard in the Liverpool tube, after a lengthy trek down several flights of stairs:
“Oh, I expect we’ll pop out in Australia.”

Overheard at Independent Spirit, a whisky shop in Bath:
Cashier, wrapping whisky bottles: “At least I know they’re going to a good home.”

Overheard in downtown Bath:
Lady: “Do you want to try the southern fried chicken?”
Daughter: “Southern where? No!”

Overheard at the Eagle and Child, in Oxford:
“Look. That door’s marked ‘Narnia.’”
“You suppose it’s the coat closet?”

In Oxford:
“Well, there’s the Inorganic Chem building. I wonder where the Stats building is.”
“Right over there.”
“Oh! What are the odds?”

In Oxford’s covered market:
Cashier: “May I see your student ID? Oh, KU! Rock chalk!”
Me: “...?!”

Overheard in Bath Abbey:
Child: “Daddy, what are these pictures on the walls? They look sad.”
Man: “They’re tombstones, darling.”
Child: “Are the people buried in the walls?!”
Man: “No, under the floor.”
Child looks down, visibly horrified.
How was London? Around London in 8 Days
Alyssa Ong

After Spring Break, the question a student would hear most is, “How was Spring Break?” However, thanks to social media and my uncontained excitement about going to London, most of my friends knew about my plans. The inquiry I was bombarded with after Spring Break was, “How was London? I want to hear all about it!” When this question came up, many highlights of London flashed through my mind and formulating a coherent answer became somewhat of a struggle. I ended up responding to the question with “It was great. Loved it!”, which really did not do it justice. For all who have asked me this question, I present my “Around London in 8 days”:

Day 1: [Credit given to 3 of my friends from Malaysia who brought me around London on my first day] Pollock Toy Museum (brought back memories of my childhood. The collection of doll houses were cute too), Handel House Museum (loved the individual explanation sheets for each room), walking around Piccadilly Circus + Oxford Street Area, Mrs. Kibble’s Olde Sweet Shoppe (candy for everyone!), Benihana (Japanese Hibachi Restaurant), Fortnum & Mason (a sweet place to get tea, chocolates, ice cream, royal game pie, etc.), London Review group dinner at Pizza Express (the place I will remember forever, thanks to the spiciest pizza ever).

Day 2: Walking tour through London (getting to know the Kensington area, tourist spots like Buckingham Palace, St. James Palace, Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, etc.), Boiler House Food Market aka Bricklane Market (the aroma in the market was irresistible: I tried Ethiopian food for the first time, enjoyed authentic Chinese baozi, and a Portuguese egg tart), Portobello Road Market (I saw a lot of antiques, record stores), Museum of Brands, Packaging, and Advertising (an extremely cool place for a School of Business student to visit).

Day 3: Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum and Tour (refer to article for a better review), Royal Academy of Music Museum (I played on 10 pianos once owned by the likes of Mozart, Chopin, Handel, Hadyn), Chinatown expedition (dim sum, a delicious duck dish, Hong Kong style egg tarts, Polo buns, and bean curd pudding), getting lost on the way to ‘One Man, Two Guvnors’ (we finally found the theatre after 30 minutes of confusion).

Day 4: Purchased a £5 ticket for Matilda (the best deal ever!), went to Her Majesty’s Theater to buy a £36 ticket for the Phantom of the Opera, M&M World (the whole store had an overly sweet, fake, chocolaty scent), British Museum (I could have spent two days there and still not have seen all the exhibits), London Review group dinner at Wagamama’s (apple and sweet ginger gyoza’s, anyone?), Matilda (it was so good I was close to tears).
Day 5: Trip to Oxford – Blackwell’s Bookstore (a 134 year-old bookstore with a Guinness World Record for its Norrington Room), Trinity College, Kate & Sidney pie with gravy and mash (actually, it was a steak, kidney, and real ale pie. I was being adventurous; it tasted delicious!), Covered Market, St. Mary’s University Chapel + tower (from there, one could get a scenic view of Oxford), Reception at Corpus Christi College.

Day 6: Purchased a £27.50 ticket for a front-row seat to Wicked (originally priced at £82), Royal Albert Hall tour (Fun fact #1: 1300/5200 seats at the Royal Albert Hall are privately owned. Fun Fact #2: the Queen owns 20 seats and is the only member of the corporation who gets tickets to every performance, all other members get tickets to 2/3 of the performances), Prince Albert Memorial (it cost £120,000 to build, a huge amount of money at the time), Hyde Park (the greener side of London), Kensington Palace (home of Prince William and Kate Middleton), Afternoon Tea at The Orangery-Kensington Palace (I felt like a princess. The food, of course, was off the charts), St. Paul’s Cathedral (climbed 250+ steps to the Whispering Gallery where a whisper on one side could be heard clearly 100 feet away; creepy yet cool), Marks & Spencer (more British goodies for friends!), Wicked (the songs and duets kept me at the edge of my seat).

Day 7: Tower of London (Crown Jewels, yes, the REAL ones. Yeoman Warders @ Beefeaters), London Bridge (not to be confused with Tower Bridge, the beautiful bridge often seen on TV), River Thames Cruise (great photo opportunities), Westminster Abbey (final resting place of royals, heroes, great authors, and musicians), HMS Belfast (a museum ship, originally a Royal Navy light cruiser), Harrods (a must-see place for tourists), Fish & Chips (finally, after 7 days, I get my dose of authentic Fish & Chips), Phantom of the Opera (could not have asked for a better musical experience).

Day 8: Purchased a £19.50 ticket for a front row seat to A Chorus Line (another great bargain!), Borough Market (my favorite market because each vendor offered samples and it was a food lover’s haven), the Chocolate Festival (I saw models of Big Ben, the London Eye, and many others made of chocolate. Too bad no pictures were allowed), A Chorus Line (wonderful choreography), London Review group dinner at the Swan (fancy 3-course meal with a breathtaking view of St. Paul’s Cathedral in the evening), Millennium Bridge (a peaceful walk across the Thames River towards St. Paul’s Cathedral; without a doubt, the best way to end a perfect trip to London).

There, an account of everything I accomplished and saw in London. It was a great adventure and a dream come true. I’d do it again in a heartbeat; there’s no question about that.
Kate Middleton Doppleganger
LONDON REVIEW REMIX

SWEET NOTHING .................................................. CALVIN HARRIS FT. FLORENCE WELCH
MACARENA ................................................................. LOS DEL RÍO
IN DA CLUB ................................................................. 50 CENT
VALERIE ................................................................. AMY WINEHOUSE
I KNEW YOU WERE TROUBLE (GOAT EDITION) ................................ TAYLOR SWIFT FT. A GOAT
BORN IN THE USA .................................................. BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
THE HOUSE THAT HEAVEN BUILT ................................ JAPANDROIDS
LONDON CALLING .................................................. THE CLASH
OXFORD COMMA .......................................................... VAMPIRE WEEKEND
SONG FOR DAN TREACY ........................................... MGMT
COME TOGETHER .................................................. THE BEATLES
WEREWOLVES OF LONDON ....................................... WARREN ZEVON
THRIFT SHOP .......................................................... MACKLEMORE AND RYAN LEWIS
UMBRELLA ............................................................... RIHANNA FT. JAY-Z
ENGLAND ............................................................... THE NATIONAL
Kelsey Carothers is a senior from Leawood, Kansas majoring in environmental interior design and minoring in art history. The London Review 2013 has supplemented her undying love of travel, musicals, food, and art. She has also discovered a new facet to her love of travel by experiencing London on her own. She hopes to return to London to continue her secret love affair with Kensington Gardens and the Victoria & Albert Museum.

Kaitlynn Howell is a senior from Wichita, Kansas, majoring in environmental interior design. Her greatest passions include carbs, musicals, and collecting characters. She is still waiting for that lost Hogwarts acceptance letter, and she is anxiously awaiting the day Kate and Will call asking for a nanny.

Valery Herman is a sophomore from Las Vegas, Nevada majoring in graphic design, which means she rarely ever sleeps. Valery is absolutely chuffed to have been a part of the London Review 2013, which only fueled her already ardent Anglomania. She hopes this trip is the first of many more to come, but until next time she will content herself with a nice hot cuppa and some Jammie Dodgers.

Julia Chasen is a junior majoring in journalism and psychology. She’s a polar bear enthusiast, and she can quote every line of Mean Girls. In her free time, she enjoys practicing her Russian accent, watching professional football, making her award-winning puppy chow, and doing Sudoku.

Alaine Caudle is a sophomore from Denton, Kansas, a town you’ve probably never heard of, nor should care about. She is a Film & Media Studies major who enjoys the little things in life – like bite size Snickers and mini horses. She loves London as an international city, but even more as a unicorn friendly one.

Mary Klayder’s directorial career includes 16 seasons of the London Review, 7 seasons of Pura Vida: The Costa Rica Experience, and 11 seasons of the extended mini-series, BSI. She has no plans to retire from her career anytime soon.

Kathryn Hoven is a senior from Chester, New Jersey. She is a dog person and a city person, who has neither. She has two brothers, and is very grateful her parents let her explore London. She hopes the UK might adopt her someday (preferably soon).
Hannah Bolton is a senior from Saint Libory, Nebraska who is fond of miscellaneous shenanigans and drinking during the day. She appreciates a great steak and ale pie and enjoys trotting over the globe in search of love (and more types of pie). She will be graduating in May to continue harassing other people in other places. Cheers.

Sara Pyle is a junior majoring in French and English. She is an ENFP Meyers-Briggs personality type and an enthusiast of Orangina and London Underground poems. When she's not wishing she was a Doctor Who companion, she can usually be found at the nearest coffee-making facility or wandering in the Watson stacks. Her life goal is to write a bestseller while sailing the world on a National Geographic cruise ship, then get married in a location as beautiful as the Kensington roof gardens.

Meaghan is pleased to make her London Review debut this spring semester of 2013. She is a senior citizen from Chicago majoring in English. Her previous roles include Lady with Too Many Cats, The Disgruntled Librarian's Keeper, and Just How Much Cheese Can One Person Eat? No, Really. Other Kansas City credits include Why is My Server So Mean? I Know This is a "French-inspired" Cafe, but Seriously, and Dear God. I'm Graduating. Amongst her favorite roles: Emily Brontë, in an off broadway production entitled Nelly, I am Heathcliff. No really, I Am. Why Are You Looking At Me Like That? She would like to thank her family for their undying love and hopes her sister gets over that argument they had last week.

Cameron Brigham ain't got time to bleed.

What can be written about Tanya that hasn't already been expressed, more succinctly and eloquently, on the third-floor men's bathroom stall door at the British Science Museum?

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Erin O’Grady is a senior from Overland Park, KS. As a scientist, she is a person who is fascinated, in layman’s terms, by very very small things, however she has huge interest in people at large. She has committed her life to traveling the globe in search of the best burger. Erin has an extreme dislike of birds. This was intensified after fending off the pigeons in London leading her to the conclusion that the only acceptable bird is a Jayhawk. Erin is often confused for Kate Middleton because of her frequent and appropriate usage of the phrase “spot on.”

Chloé is a junior studying English with a premed concentration at KU. She loves to write, sing, and in the words of Mary Klayder, “over-analyze.” She hopes to become a doctor and a writer, and she looks forward to many travels yet to be had in London.

Andrew Genova is a senior from St Louis, Missouri. He is a creative writing major, but his first love is film. His passions include: music, literature, kitsch culture, and a good glass of milk. He is thankful for his family and friends, and the opportunity to go abroad. He likes a good beer buzz early in the morning and peeling the labels off his bottles of Bud.

Hailing from Topeka, KS and in his final year at KU, Joel Coon is a man of simple tastes. He enjoys playing and listening to music, the outdoors, and goofing off with friends. Joel feels very fortunate to have traveled to London this past Spring Break and is infinitely thankful to his family for their support in all his endeavors.

Nicole Nunes is a junior from Wichita, Kansas studying journalism, with minors in psychology and business. She is an optimistic Libra who loves eating carbs, traveling, and being Brazilian. She has an excessive amount of colored skinny jeans, and she brings her water bottle with her everywhere she goes. Laughing until her stomach hurts is her favorite workout, and she truly believes brunch is the best of both worlds.

Brandon Rogers is a senior from Plano, Texas. He enjoys country music, film, and Tex-mex. As a Taurus, he is compatible with Capricorns, Pisces, and Virgos. He currently serves as a life counselor to Erin O’Grady and Kathryn Hoven, and he is not liable for services previously rendered. He is fluent in a rare dialect of the dead Latin language and enjoys feeding pigeons in the park. Twice a year, he travels to the Gulf of Mexico where he voluntarily cleans oil from the fur of baby sea otters. He enjoys preserving the lives of such delicate, fragile animals in their natural habitats.
Supporting Cast:

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DOUG CRAWFORD-PARKER

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JULIE WOOD
AMANDA SHRIWISE
KELSEY MURRELL

OUTSIDE CRITICS:
GARRETT TURNER
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A special thanks to the London Review design crew for all your hard work: Alaine Caudle, Valery Herman, Kelsey Carothers, and Kaitlynn Howell.
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