

Influences and Perceptions: Studying Abroad in Germany



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Background



- ☞ Wyoming/Hopkins
- ☞ Benedikt
- ☞ Germany

Getting Started



- ❧ Deciding was a struggle
- ❧ What fascinates me?
- ❧ Original thesis idea
- ❧ HSIRB – Human Subject Internal Review Board
- ❧ Change in thesis topic

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∞ What is a “stereotype”?

∞ Three main influences

1. Family, society/ culture (country of origin)
2. Society/culture (host country of study abroad)
3. Individual experiences from home and while abroad

∞ Target group

Cities of Study and Duration



Number of Students	City of Study	Duration of Study
1	Berlin	6 Months
1	Berlin	6 Weeks
1	Berlin	1 Year
1	Paderborn	7 Months
1	Paderborn	1 Year
1	Tübingen	1 Year
11	Bonn	6 Months

Results



What part of the U.S. are
you originally
from?

Yes.



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Results Continued



- ❧ 14 responded, 18-22 years old, Southern Michigan, wanted to better German language/ experience new culture
- ❧ Opinions before study abroad: beer, bratwurst, sauerkraut, Lederhosen, rude
- ❧ Differed from those who previously visited/had family ties to Germany: intelligent, clean, punctual, hard-working.
- ❧ Similar to parents opinions

Results Continued



∞ Experiences while abroad that influence opinions and transition into new culture

1. Language
2. Living accommodations
3. Travel
4. Relationships *

Results Continued



- Opinions started to change: realized that Germans are more private, are sometimes late, don't all like beer
- Not much different than Americans

Results Continued



- ∞ Living in a new society/culture can change views of home country
- ∞ Noticed that Americans were loud, have poor eating habits, lack of interest in other cultures, lack of public transportation
- ∞ All wish to go back (or have already) to study, work or live