OPEN WORLD CAUSE Morse Summer Project

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Summer 2016 Kansas State University

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The Open World Cause Morse Scholarship Project

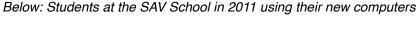
Just two weeks after taking my last final exam of my second semester at Kansas State, I was flying out of Chicago to begin what would become one of the most significant experiences of my life. I was with two of my best friends who were also my colleagues and partners in an initiative we called the Open World Project while we were in high school. Since then, the (now named) Open World Cause has grown tremendously and become a registered 501(c)3 organization within the State of Kansas. Before I discuss my summer project specifically, I would love to tell an abridged story that connects the dots from the inception of our organization to its current state of affairs.



The Open World Team, 2015, Narayanpur, Nepal

In 2011, Open World began as a senior project that aimed to get laptops and internet access to an elementary school called the SAV School in Bageshwori, Nepal. The circumstances in which we came into contact with the school were unique. The principal of the school, Govinda Panthy, was at an internet cafe in the city searching the web for new art projects for his students and came across a website called ArtSnacks which was created by Ben Honeycutt's (one of the aforementioned friends, colleagues and partners) father, a grade-school art teacher. This connection intrigued us, and when we learned that the closest computer to the school was several miles away, we decided it would be a worthy senior project to try to raise enough money to purchase two laptops and a monthly internet subscription for the school. After the existence of the school was verified, we pursued the project and within a year had achieved

our goal, and even had enough left over money to refurnish the school's small library. Students at the SAV School in Nepal were soon interacting through mediums such as Skype with people from all over the world. As we were working on this project, we continuously made connections with teachers across the United States (as well as outside the country) and invited them and their students to collaborate with us. They would help to raise money, and we would connect them to the SAV School and its students. They could Skype, become pen pals, and participate in cross cultural dialogue and work to develop a conception of global citizenship. Due to a variety of factors, the school we were supporting closed down. To be concise, the original purpose of the school, to provide access to education for children of poor agricultural families, had been fulfilled. The local economy had improved, city bussing had expanded its boundaries, and the students at the SAV School were able to attend school in the city. After a year of planning, Govinda Panthy, the SAV School principal, decided that it would be feasible to start a similar project in another part of the country. Open World utilized its growing number of connections and funded the construction of a new elementary school (Tripur Kinder Academy) near an indigenous community in Narayanpur, Nepal. This is where our team traveled this summer. The purpose of the trip was multi-faceted. Our focuses were split into three main components: research, photography/videography, and connection building. I would like to describe these three aspects in detail.







Our research piece was composed of demographic questionnaires, community interviewing, and conversations with Govinda Panthy, conducted for the purpose of gathering information on local social, economic, historical, and political contexts. I created our demographic questionnaire from a previous survey administered by Nepal's Ministry of Health (funded by USAID). What follows are a few of our notable findings from the questionnaire. We found that approximately half (or more) of the students at the school suffered from waterborne disease on a regular basis during the monsoon season. The most common source of water was from unprotected wells and, in the dry season, open bodies of water. We learned that the local health post had rehydration therapy solutions available for those with diarrhea. We also learned that either due to pesticides or genetically modified crops, poorer families no longer had to go hungry due to bad yields. In the past five years, all families have gained access to a personal toilet, and most families now wash their hands. Very few families had bank accounts or financial savings, and about the same number of adults had finished high school. However, we found that younger generations were increasingly more likely to stay in school for longer periods of time. Our community interviewing consisted of open-ended questions that also allowed for the collection of qualitative data. An example of insights gained from this is that every single lowincome family wanted school lunches provided to their children at school (something that isn't always common in the area). In fact, we found that some of the poorer students were embarrassed to eat their packed lunches in front of other students because they were aware that their food was of lower quality. Because of this knowledge, the school, Tripur Kinder Academy, now has a school lunch program. All students eat the same food and have access to fruits and vegetables. The conversations we had with Govinda Panthy, the school director, vielded insights that have become crucial to the efficacy of our partnership with him and his staff. Many cross-cultural misunderstandings have been cleared away, and both parties have a better understanding of one another now that we have lived together for a summer.

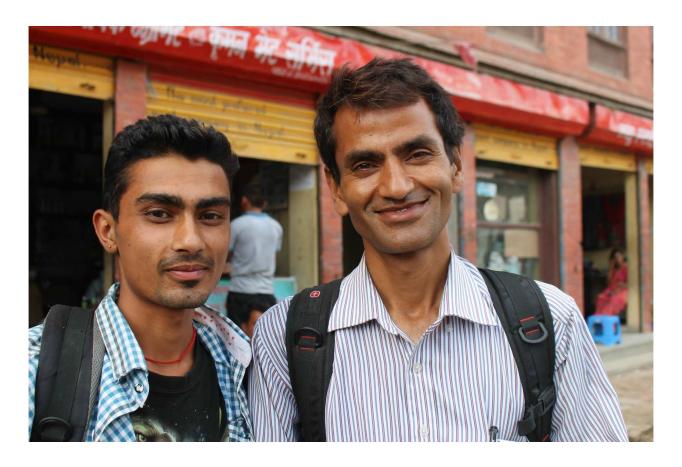


Below and above: pictures of the demographic questionnaire process at the households of two different students' families (I'm on the left)





My favorite photograph of the summer is the one from above. This was taken right as the mother said: "I want my children to go to school so they don't have to work for others in the fields like I do." I was able to capture 6,000 photographs and dozens of videos of the area, the school, and the students and teachers. This high-quality media will be crucial in the development of the organization. I was also able to record interviews with teachers and former students of Govinda Panthy's. I have interviews of multiple people my age where they talk about their experience in Govinda's SAV School in Bageshwori, and describe the impact that an education has had on their lives. Below is a young man named Saroj (left) standing with Govinda Panthy (right). He is working on getting his masters degree in Chemistry. If it wasn't for Govinda and the SAV School, he could very well still be working in the rice fields with his parents, he told me.







An example of my photographs in action on our new website, www.openworldcause.org



While in Nepal, we were able to make several connections both inside and outside the country. Inside the country, we met new teachers at new potential partner schools, as well as a sociology professor from a university in Kathmandu. Such connections are important when continuing to develop a set of best practices as our organization moves forward. Out-of-country connection building is a bit of a broad category. First of all, we were able to bring a Double machine to the school. This iPad on a Segway (below) can be accessed from anywhere in the world. Ben's father, the art teacher, wheeled around the classroom and taught an art lesson to the students. We are working to expand the application of such technology. The creators of the technology, Double Robotics, have been very impressed with our work and might even pay for our team to travel to other countries to distribute their products in the future. Besides this tech partnership, we found that something about being in Nepal gave us a kind of credibility that we did not have before. We have made a tremendous number of new connections in the short time we have been back. Rotary clubs are starting to ask us to connect with them and work out yearly sponsorships for things like teacher salaries and school lunch funding.



Above: Ben's father, Kevin Honeycutt, with students after an art lesson. Below: students watch Kevin Honeycutt on the Double machine



On top of research, media documentation, and connection building, we were also a part of a filter distribution program. I got involved in Open World specifically through my interest in water filtration. Two years ago, I established a partnership with Sawyer Products, the manufacturer of the filters you see in the pictures below. The water filters last ten years and will purify the water to exceed EPA standards. Families have begun to report no longer suffering from waterborne illness. This makes me happy. Due to avoiding tariffs, we were able bring 70 filters to the school at one fourth of the cost of buying them in the country.







This summer was the culmination of years of dedicated effort and the beginning of the next phase of the Open World Cause. We are now connecting with other non-profit organizations and working to repeat our processes with schools in other countries. On top of this we are working at K-State and KU to develop social justice-centered conferences where K-12 educators can trade ideas with academics within higher education. We are also beginning to apply for grants to support additional research developments within our growing organization. This summer project was not only productive for me in terms of my responsibilities on the organizational level, but also profoundly impactful to my trajectory as a scholar and aspiring medical student interested in development and social justice. More than anything, my experience in Nepal contributed to the shaping of my worldview. For some reason, it was easier to gain perspective from my Nepalese friends rather than life in Manhattan, but since returning I've found that these principles are at play in all contexts, including my own. The next three points are now at the forefront of my mind when making decisions and thinking about my future, and I don't think I would have the same beliefs if it were not for my experience this summer.

First of all, no matter how small, I believe any action that improves the life of another requires sacrifice. For a long time, I held the opinion that when I grew up, I could contribute to "fixing" the world's problems without any cost to myself. My Nepalese friends taught me otherwise.



Govinda Panthy, his wife, and colleagues established the SAV School over twenty years ago to provide education to poor, lower-caste farm children. They did this against the demands of wealthier community leaders who relied on inexpensive, lower-caste labor. The SAV School founders persisted, even leaving their houses at times out of fear. They gave scholarships to students who couldn't afford school and would occasionally give up their personal salaries to keep the school functioning. Today, at Tripur Kinder Academy, things are no different. The school even takes on debt in order to get more children into the classroom. While I was there, our household was told of a Dhalit (the lowest, "untouchable" cast) woman in the community whose husband had left her with six children, the youngest of which were not in school. The same week, Govinda visited her in her home and invited her children to attend school for free. Other times, we would be out for a walk and people from the community would recognize him and run up to us, asking if he could take their children into his classrooms. As a result of his kindness, Govinda has no money. However, he has changed the lives of hundreds of people, paved a path away from poverty for his students, and is loved and cared for by everyone he knows. He could make much more money teaching in another school, but he doesn't want to, for he thinks his life would not be as fulfilling. I think we could all take a page from Govinda's book. Whatever I become in the future, be it a physician or otherwise, my work will incorporate the philosophy Govinda Panthy has built his life on.

Secondly, I learned the importance of public infrastructure. I used to be a member of the large group of people who believe that charity is an effective mechanism in alleviating societal ills. When in a country that lacks high quality medical and educational infrastructure, it quickly becomes apparent that no amount of charity work can be as effective as a government that

confers rights to its people. As far as access to medical care goes, the nearest hospital from my location was a twelve hour bus ride away. The costs of care, transportation, and missing work make treatment impossible for anyone with a life threatening illness. Cancer, for example, means death for poor farmers in Narayanpur. Pictured below is a mother of a TriKA student. She has another daughter; her name is Lila. Lila is 11 years old and has been lying on their dirt floor all of her life. She has a physical and mental disability, and the family has never had the money to take her to Kathmandu to see a doctor. It is impossible to not be infuriated by the way poverty and inequity prevents people from meeting their most basic needs.



In Nepal, access to education is a guaranteed right. However, the average public school student only has a 47% chance of passing on to higher education. While the charitable private school we are supporting is certainly giving small numbers of children a slight edge in overcoming poverty, it is doing little to create the social change needed to strengthen the public sector's ability to provide quality education to all of Nepal's children. To quote Paul Farmer, "you can't have public health without working with the public sector. You can't have public education without working with the public sector in education."

Finally, my summer experience taught me of the significance of listening to those you are trying to help and left me with a desire to make the problems of the less affluent more

compelling to those who are more powerful. It wasn't until Govinda Panthy surveyed poor, rural farmers in Bageshwori that he discovered the need for education in their community. Historically, it wasn't until doctors asked for advice from poor, uneducated multi-drug resistant tuberculosis patients that they were able to develop a best practice for treating the disease. I was recently at a lobby meeting with one of our state Representatives in Washington D.C.. A woman I was with (actually a K-State graduate) was explaining to the Representative the requirements and local procedures for acquiring SNAP benefits in her hometown. The Representative essentially told her she was lying, and couldn't possibility understand the program she had benefitted from and then worked for over the past decade. My experiences in Nepal this summer taught me the importance of hearing the input of people directly affected by social and economic oppression. Today, I believe that the creation of a better world requires listening to our foremost experts on poverty and illness: those who know firsthand what it is like to live without money and those who are deprived of their health. What follows from listening to others is the responsibility to tell their story. If I do become a medical care provider, I will inherently have more influential social and political cachet than nearly all of my patients who are poor and underserved. This will come with the responsibility to advocate for them both on an individual level and for solutions to the structural barriers that deny them access to affordable, adequate health care. At the end of the day, I believe the humility of understanding that everyone has something to teach you is a good thing. Everybody should be interested in access to education, food, clean water, and health care for everybody, and to achieve this, everybody's voices need to be heard.

The Morse Scholarship gave me the opportunity to engage in what was the most significant learning experience of my life, and I appreciate the investment that was made in me as a student and future professional.



Pictured above: the Open World team as we left the Kathmandu airport to return to Kansas, United States

The following two essays are included to serve as examples of the thinking my summer project elicited from me. The first essay is something I penned on my 24 hour flight to Kathmandu. It articulates Open World's ongoing struggle in being caught between unreflective activism and paralyzing skepticism, a theme of many of our conversations. The second essay is a reflection on what my summer project brought to my academic fall semester.

Thoughts Before Departure

In our quest for efficacy and improved solidarity with those who are less affluent, it is important we develop habits of self-reflection and inquiry during our stay at TriKA. Sociologically, we can be sure our projects in Nepal have produced unintended consequences—though perhaps only in the slightest—because our understanding of Nepal's social structures and political economy will always fall short of reality. Our youthful, western constructed perspective will never be symmetrical with Govinda Panthy's, nor his Nepalese peers. However, careful evaluation of the conditions that both enable our work and limit the effectiveness of our actions can help Open World design better programs and further develop our capacity to be reflective in our work.

A spotlight on "development"

Global development priorities in the present are constantly patterned by social forces with roots in the colonial past. It ought to be a goal of our team to be apprehensive of continuations of the discourses of colonial medicine (historically some of the first rich to poor interventions) and post WWII development, such as the underlying notions of backwards non-westerners and faith in technological fixes. I am skeptical that we have purged ourselves of the aforementioned notions of superiority over inhabitants of the global East, and I'm quite sure we have an unreasonable amount of confidence in technological fixes. We have had little autonomy in the development of our ideologies, but paying careful attention to history and consciously applying social theory to our work can aid us in a resocialization of global development if we so desire.

Academics from the field of development have traced the origins of modern development ideology to president Harry Truman's inaugural address in 1949, during which Truman introduced his vision of a "fair deal" for the postwar world. A quick read of the address makes it easy to see that technocracy and science was the way in which Westerners sought to bring equity to less affluent nations: "We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas." While this statement is well-intentioned, post-war development efforts were still colored with colonial ideologies. Language and concepts of equity were overshadowed by narrow and "cost-effective" interventions that were designed to address the problems of "backward" peoples who

needed a dose of modernity. "Socialization for scarcity" forced programs to choose between immediate provision of services and long-term investment in infrastructure. Development campaigns constantly failed because of the overwhelming belief in technological fixes.

There is no escaping the social construction of our ideologies, so finding continuities between history and our work can be enlightening. Consider Open World's ideology in its desire to provide laptops and internet access, among other technologies, to less affluent people in rural Nepal. Connections can instantly be drawn between historical development efforts and our own! Before any critique can be made, I must point out that our actions have been great in many ways. Teachers at SAV and TriKA desired an implementation of laptops in their curriculum. Access to computers and the internet can accelerate them in today's world of global connectivity. Funding avenues have opened up and educational enrichment has been provided by Open World. That being said, was the inception of Open World partially influenced by a perceived importance of technological fixes? We currently face the problem of donors' preferences for narrow, top-down approaches to charity. Which headline sounds more attractive? "High school legacy project provides first world technology to rural Nepal," or "High school legacy project makes informed decision to financially support Bageshwori community involvement in Nepalese school because of Govinda Panthy's knowledge of locally specific social and economic factors?" The comparison could use some work, but the problem is very real. The average donor desires to see their money go to work immediately. This means materials such as laptops and double machines are preferred over long term investments in the educational infrastructure of Narayanpur. I know Open World doesn't believe that laptops and an iPad on wheels are the final step in combatting poverty—to assume otherwise is to underestimate poverty's deep embedment in social, economic, and political factors however, the paradigm of the rest of our generation may not be so informed. Finally, I'm troubled by the possibility of our team being (only partially) motivated (to quote myself from above) to "address the problems of 'backward' peoples who need a dose of modernity." Though I like to think we give people more dignity than that, I believe that our intentions cannot always escape the lurking social forces that have shaped our worldviews. My point here is not to suggest that Open World is a shallow and ignorant organization, but rather to point out that all people and organizations have been affected by the patterns of social forces that all too often have their roots in shallowness and ignorance. However, our success as an organization will skyrocket if we recognize this and (to say it once more) develop habits of critical self-reflection.

End of Semester Essay

People speak of "the lens through which we see the world" as a figurative explanation for the theory of social construction. As a student who needs his glasses to read his sociology textbooks, the analogy applies well to what I find significant about my college education. I have poor vision, and until my freshman year of college, I wore the same pair of glasses since the sixth grade. I purchased new corrective lenses when I entered K-State and was amazed by how much visual detail and perspective I gained from this upgrade. My university has since taught me the value of ditching my figurative lenses and acquiring new ones through scholarship and investigation, correcting my intellectual hyperopia and allowing my mind to be more receptive to new facts and values, just as the pieces of glass on my face allow for a more effective path of light from the outside world towards my corneas. I found that my project in Nepal left me with better "vision" than I've ever had; I saw greater opportunity, value, and responsibility in my coursework this fall than I realized existed. This summer's experience cultivated a new understanding of three things that pertain to my education: 1) the meaning of the term "global", 2) the need for a biosocial approach towards problems I'm studying to solve, and 3) why my education matters in the context of my obligations to others. In answering three questions, I hope I'm able to convey how the perspective gained from my summer project has affected my approach to my education.

What does "global" mean? Until recently, I understood international and domestic poverty as two separate sets of problems. From public discourse to international development literature, working "globally" connotes problems of "elsewhere"—issues affecting an othered "them" rather than an inclusive "us." But time spent with my Nepali colleagues has led me to disagree with the status quo's conception of what it means to

work globally. Manhattan, Kansas is on the globe, too, and people in our own country suffer from deficiencies in infrastructure similar to what I saw in Nepal this summer. Take the Tharus, for example, the indigenous group which Open World's efforts are primarily benefitting. At first glance their social situation seems foreign, as illiterate people living in mud houses suffering from waterborne disease is not common in the Global West. But the social and economic forces that keep the Tharus from improving their standard of living are quite familiar: poverty created and fueled by racism and discrimination, exacerbated by living in a state that does not confer the basic human rights of education and healthcare. Take these factors and plug them into an American context and you have a friend of mine, a bright student whose access to education is deeply affected by poverty. Recently, his disabled sister needed an emergency surgery and his family couldn't afford the co-payment on the procedure, so he agreed to guit school—his way out of poverty—to make the payment himself. Both the Tharus and my friend's governments have failed them in conferring the basic human rights of education and healthcare, provisions that would reduce their share of suffering and inequality. Learning about inequality in a different culture—and drawing comparisons to my own—gave me a curiosity of understanding contemporary human problems at a deeper level; confining social suffering to terms like "us" and "them" is no longer ideal. Why? Because identifying another human being as something different from myself puts me at risk of not doing my best to help them. After returning from Nepal, I began researching the phenomenon of otherization—something I was and still am guilty of—and its consequences in the arena of global health. From the policy level, the 21st century has seen United States international development authorities recommend letting the millions of people living with AIDS in Africa die because, as the former president of the USAID put it, "Africans don't understand a Western concept of time"—an argument that low-

balled their ability to take a pill twice a day. It wasn't until doctors saw AIDS as a universal human problem worth solving that AIDS regimens were developed for poor patients in developing nations. And at the clinical level in our own country, research shows excess mortality among African Americans without health insurance, with an insidious understanding by care-providers of them as "others" likely to blame. So when studying Anatomy and Physiology and Personal Wellness this semester (an intro course of basic health information), I would pay close attention to how health problems were talked about. In my physiology lecture we learned about the toxins released by bacteria in water that destroy the enteric systems of "people in poor countries." But information covering heart disease or cancer was discussed exclusively in an American context. Although this disjuncture doesn't seem deplorable, our socialization of knowledge of disease-burdens across cultures affects our policy-making decisions. For decades, international health efforts have been focused on disease specific interventions for ailments such as waterborne illnesses, but little thought has been given to chronic conditions such as heart disease or cancer. Many scholars point to separating these health conditions into the categories of "them" and "us" as a negative force in development efforts that has resulted in the undermining of health systems in developing nations. Learning that it's easy to place the premium on differences between cultures rather than sameness in humanity—and the consequences this line of thinking produces -made me keen to draw more connections between cultures in my courses this semester. How the same disease affects different populations, or how different health care systems can respond to similar needs, were questions that arose and deepened my curiosity in my subject matter. My experience in Nepal also made me want to study subjects outside of health and medicine. When working in a culture that you don't understand, you learn how truly useless you are to the people around you. That lesson

led me to believe the converse would also be true: the better I can understand my own environment in the United States, the better I can be an effective agent of change in my own work. This has led to a realization of the limitations of understanding biology alone; I'm now interested in investing time into studying sociology and anthropology in my remaining time as an undergraduate.

One of the things I enjoyed most over the summer was listening to our Nepali colleagues talk about social problems in their own country. Because it was such an unfamiliar environment, the freshness of the issues they discussed allowed me to appreciate their complexity. From politics, to economics, to public health it was clear that having any grasp of solutions to these problems would entail a sociological and anthropological understanding of the environment they existed in. As an aspiring medical student, it became clear how limited I might be as a physician if I didn't understand the social forces outside of my clinic affecting my patients, often constraining the agency of the poorest of them to make healthy choices and seek medical treatment. When shadowing doctors in the fall I became just as interested in their patients' lives outside the clinic as the biological ailments that brought them under their care. Suddenly, the effectiveness of the \$1.50 a meal that a diabetic SNAP beneficiary receives became just as critical to understand as their cells' resistance to insulin, to give an example. Or the blue collar worker with a torn rotator cuff who has to choose between losing his current job or getting an expensive surgery that would put him out of work for half a year. After Nepal, I've realized the need to understand the world holistically—from a microbial to a large-scale level—as all of the problems I face, without exception, will be both biological and social. In my courses, as I began to think about how economic status, education level, cultural traditions, and access to infrastructure all influence, say, dietary habits, which are crucial determinants of diseases I will treat—heart disease and obesity—I

developed a sense of urgency for understanding problems that interest me through multiple frames of knowledge. As a result I enrolled in an anthropology course for the spring semester that doesn't count towards my degree, simply to gain valuable training in a field outside of my career path. In my job with HandsOn Kansas State I began to incorporate interviews with beneficiaries of our food distributions as a means for designing services better suited to the needs of the low-income populations we serve. K-State has never implemented a survey component to their food distributions, but my experience in Nepal taught me that understanding people is the critical first step in helping them. We've already implemented successful reforms based on our survey responses! My summer project gave me appreciation of complexity and a curiosity of understanding the world through multiple frames of knowledge; as such a habit renders whole what is hard to see as such. Thus far, my two paradigm shifts—redefining the nature of contemporary human problems and an understanding of how to solve them have been personal developments on a scholarly level. But the development of something else that is much more important, and tremendously more difficult to explain, has been accelerated by my experience working with my Nepali friends, who in so many regards are more appropriately termed my teachers or, to be completely honest, heroes.

To what do I owe people? I can't say whether or not objective responsibility exists, but if it does, it must accrue through privilege. Our facile social construction of right and wrong disregards individuals as a representation of a confluence of forces outside of their control, simultaneously entangling moral value with wealth and social status. As a result, we go about our lives not giving much thought to the hundreds of millions of people living in grinding poverty, not caring that the economic and social forces our own predicament can be attributed to are the very same that shape the reality of the world's bottom billion. We believe that North America and Europe posses the

world's greatest civilizations because they've worked hard and held proper values, while "developing" nations are poor because of their own internal problems. But this is a lie. Reflection on history reveals the Western world's richness to be unnatural, actively acquired through the plunder, murder, and enslavement of millions of people throughout history. As a white American man attending a university at no cost to myself, I've derived incredible advantages from the outcomes of various atrocities. I've always known this, but haven't possessed the intelligence to truly understand the weight of the truth; I don't know if I ever will. But being in one of the poorest nations on Earth allows for a better basis for that understanding than any amount of thinking I could have done on my own. All of my absurd notions of "deserving" the wealth I possess crumble when I ask myself what things would be like if I had been born in Nepal. Having personal connections to people living in extreme poverty stokes the flames of my indignation, and thus deepens my conception of my personal responsibility to use my life to work towards equity. In this regard, my time as a student can be viewed as an investment in my ability to help other people. This line of thinking brings together scholarship and spirituality, giving deeper meaning to my studies. Someday, other people will be counting on me to have studied hard in school; the knowledge I gain now will enhance my ability to effectively serve others. At a particularly difficult point in my academic semester this fall I was listening to a lecture given by Dr. Jim Yong Kim, president of the World Bank group, co-founder of Partners in Health, former director of the HIV/AIDS program at the WHO, former professor at Harvard Medical School and former president of Dartmouth University. Dr. Kim's research and innovations have led initiatives to save millions of lives and raise the standard of living for people around the world. In this lecture, a college student in the audience asked him about what an undergraduate ought to be doing to become an effective doctor working in Global Health. I listened intently, eager to discover his secret

to becoming a medical superstar. I was surprised when he said: "If you're a student of your age wanting to do what I do, I suggest you focus solely on studying your anatomy and physiology." He went on to explain that working as a doctor without a strong grasp of this basic knowledge does a disservice to all whom you strive to help, and that skills are what is truly needed to harness privilege in the quest for equity. This answer, combined with reflection on my experiences in Nepal, breathed new life into my studies and has led to the view of my education I currently hold.

My summer's experience has been a foundation for many new developments in my worldview. Critical reflection of my memories of Nepal has sharpened my scholarship more than I could have imagined. Learning in this way seems to be continuous and endless—I've even learned from the development of ideas in the creation of this essay. Chasing experience and crystalizing it as knowledge through academic study brings excitement and curiosity to coursework that was once characterized as time consuming and boring. Purpose and meaning driving my education yields a new tolerance for confusion and difficulty, a development that I believe will continue to help me excel in my future courses. I'm thrilled to have been given the opportunity to spend a summer in Nepal, and I can't imagine my life without the friends and experiences I gained there.

-January 2016

Community Surveying

On the following page is an example of a community survey I adapted from a USAID/
Nepal Ministry of Health demographic questionnaire. Along with administering this, we also
asked students' families the following four questions: 1) Why did you send your child to TriKA?

2) If you didn't send your child here, where would you send him or her? 3) What makes
education valuable to you? 4) What would make TriKA better for you and your child? Listening
to commentary from parents was without a doubt the most valuable use of our time in Nepal.
Their responses have allowed us to tell their stories and inspire those around us to support
TriKA in its mission to provide affordable education to marginalized populations in the
Naraynapur community.

From a blog I wrote in Nepal: "As Connor has already written about, Nepal is a country that is rich with ethnic and cultural diversity. Nepal's 2001 census enumerated 102 castes and ethnicities and 92 living languages within the country. The multiplicity of these variations compounds the complexity of comprehending the local political, economic, and institutional social forces and understanding how they have shaped the society we are working in. Still, we are doing our best to be active students of our Nepalese friends and acquaintances as we believe that an understanding of the relationships that govern local social action can help us to design better programs and aid Tripur Kinder Academy in creating practical solutions to educational challenges in its community.

Tripur Kinder Academy, or TriKA, primarily serves marginalized and lower-class populations. Approximately half of the students are Tharu (an indigenous ethnicity), and the rest of the students are either Dalits ("untouchables," considered impure), Magar (another indigenous group), or Chetri (second-class caste), with a few students who are of the Brahman (highest) caste. Supporting the work of professionals pursuing social justice in their own communities is the primary focus of Open World, and accompanying local innovators in their operations to alleviate inequity and social suffering is the way in which we have chosen to go about our work. When working to inform others of the forms of structural violence at play in our students' contexts, I think a great place to start is a historical perspective of the indigenous Tharu population, as it is the second largest indigenous group in the Tarai region and our largest demographic of students at TriKA. In this post I would like to summarize what we have learned about the Tharu people from Govinda Panthy, former administrator of the SAV School in Bageshwori and the current head of TriKA here in Narayanpur..."

Open World Survey 2015

June 2015

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE

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RESULT*				 RESULT
NEXT VISIT: DATE				TOTAL NUMBER
TIME				OF VISITS
*RESULT CODES: COMPL				TOTAL PERSONS
AT HO	USEHOLD MEMBER AT H ME AT .:"ME OF VISIT			IN HOUSEHOLD U 3
4 POSTP		OR EXTENDED ERIOD	OF TIME	TOTAL ELIGIBLE
	ING VACANT ON ADDRES	SS NOT A DWELLING		WOMEN
7 DWELL 8 DWILL OTHER	INC ESTROYED HO	w many M/F	over 12?	TOTAL ELIGIBLE MEN
OTHER		(SPECIFY)		LINE NO. OF
				RESPONDENT TO HOUSEHOLD
				QUESTIONNAIRE
SUPERVI	SOR	OFFIC EDITO		KEYED BY
NAME				
DATE				

Do you have any questions? May I begin the interview now?		
SIGNATURE OF INTERVIEWER:	DATE:	_
RESPONDENT AGREES TO BE INTERVIEWED 1	RESPONDENT DOES NOT AGREE TO BE INTERVIEWED	2 → EN[

HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULE

					SEHOLD S		IF AGE 10 OR OLDER					
LINE NO.	USUAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS	RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF	SEX	RESID	ENCE	AGE	MARITAL STATUS		ELIGIBILITY			
1	2	HOUSEHOLD 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9,4	4	10	11
	Please give me the names of the persons who usually live in your household and guests of the household who stayed here last night, starting with the head of the household. AFTER LISTING THE NAMES AND RECORDING THE RELATIONSHIP AND SEX FOR EACH PERSON, ASK QUESTIONS 2A-2C TO BE SURE THAT THE LISTING IS COMPLETE. THEN ASK APPROPRIATE	What is the relationship of (NAME) to the head of the household? SEE CODES BELOW.	Is (NAME) male or female?	Does (NAME) usually live here?	Did (NAME) stay here last night?	How old is (NAME)? IF 95 OR MORE, RECORD '95'.	What is (NAME)'s current marital status? 1 = CURRENTLY MARRIED 2 = DIVORCED/ SEPARATED 3 = WIDOWED 4 = NEVER-MARRIED	CIRCLE LINE NUMBER OF ALL WOMEN AGE 15-49			CIRCLE LINE NUMBER OF ALL MEN AGE 15-49	CIRCLE LINE NUMBER OF ALL CHILDREN AGE 0-5
	QUESTIONS IN COLUMNS 5-20 FOR EACH PERSON. Be sure to include the respondent!											
01	painlaw	0 0	M F 2	Y N 1 2	Y N 1 2	in years	1	01		I	01	01
02	mominlaw	0 0	1 2	1 2	1 2	62	1	02		?	02	02
03	husband	00	1 2	1 2	1 2	22	1	03		3	03	03
04	respondent /wife	00	1 2	1 2	1 2	24	1	04		ļ	04	04
05	childboy	0 0	2	1 2	1 2	3	0	05		5	05	05
06	Blank	00	1 2	1 2	1 2	0	0	06		;	06	06
07	Blank	00	1 2	1 2	1 2	0	0	07			07	07
08	Blank	00	1 2	1 2	1 2	0	0	08			08	08
09	Blank	0 0	1 2	1 2	1 2	0	0	09			09	09
10	Blank FOR Q. 3: RELATIONSHIP TO H	00	1 2	1 2	1 2	0	0	10			10	10

CODES FOR Q. 3: RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

		IF AGE 0-1	7 YEARS			IF AGE 3 YEAR OR OLDER	RS	IF AGI	E 3-24 YEARS	IF AGE 0-4 YEARS
LINE NO.		SURVIVORSHIP A BIOLOGICA		E OF		EVER ATTEND SCHOOL	DED		ENT/RECENT TTENDANCE	BIRTH REGIS- TRATION
	12	13	14	15	16	16A	17	18	19	20
					Has (NAME) ever attended school?	Has (NAME) ever participated in a literacy program or any other program that involves learning to read and write (not including primary school)?	What is the highest grade (NAME) has completed? SEE CODES BELOW.	Did (NAME) attend school at any time during the (2067)' (2068) school year?	During this/that school school year, what grade [Is/was] (NAME) attending?	Does (NAME) have a birth certificate? IF NO, PROBE: Has (NAME)'s birth ever been registered with the VDC/ municipality? 1 = HAS CERTIFICATE 2 = REGISTERED 3 = NEITHER 8 = DON'T KNOW
01					Y N 1 2 GO TO 17	Y N 1	GRADE	Y N 1 2	GRADE 0	0
02					1 2 GO TO 17	1 2 G 10 0	0	1 2 G TC 0	0	0
03					1 2 GO TO 17	1 2	9	1 2	0	0
04					2 GO TO 17	1 2	10	1 2 G 15 0	0	0
05					2 GO TO 17	1 2 G TO 0	pre	1) 2 GO TO 20	0	0
06					1 2 G 10 7	1 2 G TC 0	0	1 2	0	0
07					1 2 G TO 7	1 2 G TO 0	0	1 2 (TO)0	0	0
08					1 2 G 70 7	1 2 G0	0	1 2 0 TO 0	0	0
09					1 2 G 10 7	1 2 G 10 0	0	1 2 () TO 20	0	0
10					1 2 G TO 7	1 2 G \(\tau_0 \)	0	1 2 1 T(20	0	0

CODES FOR Qs. 17 AND 19: EDUCATION

MIGRATION

21	Now I would like to ask you about members of this household who lived here in the past 10 years but have since moved away. Are there any members of your household who lived here in the past 10 years but who have since moved away?				YES 1 NO 2 DON'T KNOW . 8	
LINE NO.	MIGRANTS	SEX	MONTH AND YEAR MOVED AWAY	AGE	REASON FOR MOVING	PLACE TRAVELLED TO
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Please give me the names of the persons who are living outside of this household? AFTER LISTING THE NAMES AND RECORDING THE SEX FOR EACH PERSON, ASK QUESTIONS 25-28 FOR EACH PERSON	Is (NAME) male or female?	In what month and year did (NAME) move away?	How old was (NAME) when s/he moved away? IF AGE 95 OR MORE, RECORD 95'. IF AGE LESS THAN 1 YEAR RECORD '00'	What was the main reason that (NAME) moved away?	Where has (NAME) travelled to? IF 'INDIA' AND 'NEPAL ASK FOR NAME OF THE CITY AND CODE; IF OTHER THAN INDIA OR NEPAL ASK FOR NAME OF THE COUNTRY. RECORD THE CODES AS PROVIDED.
01	Blank	M F	MONTH 0 YEAR 0	YEARS 0	WORK 1 STUDY 2 MARRIAGE 3 FAMILY 4 SECURITY 5 OTHER Other 6 (SPECIFY) DON'T KNOW 8	NEPAL
02	Blank	M F	MONTH 0 YEAR 0	YEARS	WORK 1 STUDY 2 MARRIAGE 3 FAMILY 4 SECURITY 5 OTHER 6 (SPECIFY) DON'T KNOW 8	District of Nepal INDIA
03	Blank	M F	MONTH 0 YEAR 0	YEARS 0	WORK 1 STUDY 2 MARRIAGE 3 FAMILY 4 SECURITY 5 OTHER 6 (SPECIFY) DON'T KNOW 8	NEPAL 1 District of Nepal INDIA 3 OTHER COUNTRY 3 DON'T KNOW 998
04	Blank	M F	MONTH 0 YEAR 0	YEARS 0	WORK	District of Nepal NDIA 2 OTHER COUNTRY 3 DON'T KNOW 998
05	Blank	M F	MONTH 0 YEAR 0	YEARS 0	WORK 1 STUDY 2 MARRIAGE 3 FAMILY 4 SECURITY 5 OTHER 6 (SPECIFY) DON'T KNOW 8	NEPAL 1 District of Nepal INDIA
Q.29	TOTAL NUMBER OF MIGRA	ANTS				
	TICK HERE IF CONTINUA	ATION SHEET U	ISED			

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

NO.	QUESTIONS AND FILTERS	CODING CATEGORIES	SKIP
101	How often does anyone smoke inside your house? Would you say daily, weekly, monthly, less than monthly, or never?	DAILY 1 WEEKLY 2 MONTHLY 3 LESS THAN MONTHLY 4 NEVER 2	
102	What is the main source of drinking water for members of your household?	PIPED WATER PIPED INTO DWELLING 11 PIPED TO YARD/PLOT 12 PUBLIC TAP/STANDPIPE 13 TUBE WELL OR BOREHOLE 21 DUG WELL PROTECTED WELL 31 UNPROTECTED WELL 43 WATER FROM SPRING PROTECTED SPRING 41 UNPROTECTED SPRING 42 RAINWATER 51 TANKER TRUCK 61 SURFACE WATER (RIVER/DAM/ LAKE/POND/STREAM/CANAL/ IRRIGATION CHANNEL) 71 STONE TAP/DHARA 81 BOTTLED WATER 96 OTHER Other 96	0 → 104A → 105
103	Where is that water source located?	IN OWN DWELLING 1 IN OWN YARD/PLOT 2 ELSEWHERE 9	0 → 104A
104	How long does it take to go there, get water, and come back?	MINUTES . 0 0 0 0 D DON'T KNOW 998	
104A	Do you use the main water source all year or only part of the year?	ALL YEAR 2	→ 105

NO.	QUESTIONS AND FILTERS	CODING CATEGORIES	SKIP
105	Do you do anything to the water to make it safer to drink?	YES	107
106	What do you usually do to make the water safer to drink? Anything else?	BOIL A ADD BLEACH/CHLORINE/ PIYUSH/WATER GUARD B STRAIN THROUGH A CLOTH C USE WATER FILTER (CERAMIC/ BIOSAND/COLLOIDAL FILTER) D	
	RECORD ALL MENTIONED.	SOLAR DISINFECTION E LET IT STAND AND SETTLE F OTHER X (SPECIFY) Z	000
107	What kind of toilet facility do members of your household usually use?	FLUSH OR POUR FLUSH TOILET FLUSH TO PIPED SEWER SYSTEM	0
		BUCKET TOILET	→ 110
108	Do you share this toilet facility with other households?	YES	→ 110
109	How many households in total use this toilet facility?	NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS 0 0 IF LESS THAN 10 95 DON'T KNOW 98	0
110	Does your household have: Electricity? A radio? A television? A mobile telephone? A non-mobile telephone? A refrigerator? A table? A chair? A bed? A sofa? A cupboard? A computer? A clock? A fan? A dhiki/janto?	YES NO ELECTRICITY 1	

NO.	QUESTIONS AND FILTERS	CODING CATEGORIES	SKIP
111	What type of fuel does your household mainly use for cooking?	ELECTRICITY 01 LPG 02 NATURAL GAS 03 BIOGAS 04 KEROSENE 05 COAL, LIGNITE 06 CHARCOAL 07 WOOD 08 STRAW/SHRUBS/GRASS 09 AGRICULTURAL CROP 10 ANIMAL DUNG -	0
		NO FOOD COOKED IN HOUSEHOLD	→ 114
112	Is the cooking usually done in the house, in a separate building, or outdoors?	IN THE HOUSE IN A SEPARATE BUILDING OUTDOORS OTHER Other (SPECIFY)	114
113	Do you have a separate room which is used as a kitchen?	YES 1 NO	
114	MAIN MATERIAL OF THE FLOOR. RECORD OBSERVATION.	NATURAL FLOOR	0 0
115	MAIN MATERIAL OF THE ROOF. RECORD OBSERVATION.	NATURAL ROOFING NO ROOF	0 0 0

NO.	QUESTIONS AND FILTERS	CODING CATEGORIES	SKIP
116	MAIN MATERIAL OF THE EXTERIOR WALLS.	NATURAL WALLS	
	RECORD OBSERVATION.	NO WALLS 11 CANE/PALM/TRUNKS 12	片
		MUD/SAND	_
		BAMBOO WITH MUD	
		PLYWOOD 23	
		CARDBOARD 24 REUSED WOOD 25	
		FINISHED WALLS CEMENT	
		STONE WITH LIME/CEMENT 32 BRICKS 33	
		CEMENT BLOCKS 34	
		WOOD PLANKS/SHINGLES 35	
		OTHER Other 96 (SPECIFY)	
117	How many rooms in this household are used for sleeping?		
		ROOMS 1	
118	Does any member of this household own:	YES NO	
	A watch?	WATCH 1 2	
	A bicycle/rickshaw? A motorcycle or motor scooter?	BICYCLE/RICKSHAW 1 2 MOTORCYCLE/SCOOTER 1	
	A three wheel tempo? An animal-drawn cart?	THREE WHEEL TEMPO 1 2 ANIMAL-DRAWN CART 1 2	
	A car or truck?	ANIMAL-DRAWN CART	
119	Does any member of this household own any agricultural land?	YES	→ 121
120	How many bigha/ropani of agricultural land do members of this household own?	BIGHA 1	
		SIGIA	
		ROPANI	
	IF 95 OR MORE, CIRCLE '995'. IF LESS THAN 1 RECORD '00'	95 OR MORE BIGHA/ROPANI 995 DON'T KNOW 998	
121	Does this household own any livestock, herds, other farm animals, or poultry?	YES	□ → 123
122	How many of the following animals does this household own?		
	IF NONE, ENTER '00'. IF 95 OR MORE, ENTER '95'.		
	IF UNKNOWN, ENTER '98'.		
	Buffalo?	BUFFALO	
	Milk cows or bulls?	COWS/BULLS	
	Horses, donkeys, or mules?	HORSES/DONKEYS/MULES 0	
	Goats?	GOATS	
	Sheep?	SHEEP	
	Chickens?	CHICKENS 0	
	Ducks?	DUCKS	
	Pigs?	PIGS 1	
	Yaks?	YAKS 0	
			<u> </u>

NO.	QUESTIONS AND FILTERS	CODING CATEGORIES	SKIP
123	Does any member of this household have a bank account/cooperative/or other savings account?	YES	
124	Does your household have any mosquito nets that can be used while sleeping?	YES	→ 126
125	How many mosquito nets does your household have? IF 7 OR MORE NETS, RECORD '7'.	NUMBER OF NETS2	
126	Please show me where members of your household most often wash their hands.	OBSERVED NOT OBSERVED, NOT IN DWELLING/YARD/PLOT 2 NOT OBSERVED, NO PERMISSION TO SEE 3 NOT OBSERVED, OTHER REASON 4	129
127	OBSERVATION ONLY: OBSERVE PRESENCE OF WATER AT THE PLACE FOR HANDWASHING.	WATER IS AVAILABLE	
128	OBSERVATION ONLY: OBSERVE PRESENCE OF SOAP, DETERGENT, OR OTHER CLEANSING AGENT.	SOAP OR DETERGENT (BAR, LIQUID, POWDER, PASTE) ASH, MUD, SAND NONE C	
129	ASK RESPONDENT FOR A TEASPOONFUL OF COOKING SALT. TEST SALT FOR IODINE.	NO IODINE 1 <15 PPM 2 ≥15 PPM 3	
	(Probably not possible)	SALT NOT TESTED 6 (SPECIFY REASON)	

HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY

NO.	QUESTIONS AND FILTERS	CODING CATEGORIES	SKIP
130	In the past 12 months, how frequently did you worry that your household would not have enough food?	NEVER 1 RARELY 2 SOMETIMES 3 OFTEN 4	
131	In the past 12 months, how often were you or any household member not able to eat the kinds of foods you preferred because of a lack of resources?	NEVER 1 RARELY 2 SOMETIMES 3 OFTEN 4	
132	In the past 12 months, how often did you or any household member have to eat a limited variety of foods due to a lack of resources?	NEVER 1 RARELY 2 SOMETIMES 3 OFTEN 4	
133	In the past 12 months, how often did you or any household member have to eat a smaller meal than you felt you felt you needed because there was not enough food?	NEVER 1 RARELY 2 SOMETIMES 3 OFTEN 4	
134	In the past 12 months, how often did you or any household member eat fewer meals in a day because of resources to get food?	NEVER 1 RARELY 2 SOMETIMES 3 OFTEN 4	
135	In the past 12 months, how often was there with no food to eat of any kind in your household because of lack of resources to get food?	NEVER 1 RARELY 2 SOMETIMES 3 OFTEN 4	
136	In the past 12 months, how often did you or any household member go to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?	NEVER 1 RARELY 2 SOMETIMES 3 OFTEN 4	
137	CHECK Qs.130-136 ALL CODE `1' NOT ALL CODE CIRCLED CIRCLE		□ → 201
138	Did your household have to adopt the following to meet the household food need in the last 12 months? Take loan? Collect wild food? Consume seed stock for next season? Sell household assets? Sell livestock? Sell land? Probe: Any other steps taken? If yes, specify.	YES NO TAKE LOAN 1	
139	What was the cause of food deficiency in your household in the last 12 months?	SHOCK FACTORS DROUGHT A LANDSLIDE B CROP FAILURE C FLOOD D TEMPORAL FACTORS FINANCIAL PROBLEM E NOT AVAILABLE IN MARKET F OTHER Other X (SPECIFY)	00000