

Preface

In the Fall of 2000, my first semester at Virginia Tech, I began searching for volunteer programs in Africa on the Internet. My hope was to spend the summer “somewhere in Africa” doing research and volunteer work, engaging both my academic and activist selves. My original idea had been to return to West Africa, the site of my earliest childhood memories, somehow bridging my past and present. After e-mailing a number of organizations, I received just one response – from AHEAD (Adventures in Health, Education, and Agricultural Development, Inc.) inviting me to apply for their Summer 2001 Volunteer Program. I immediately latched onto a mention of family planning on their website – contraceptive technology, after all, fit neatly into both Science and Technology Studies and my own feminist agenda. I wrote two extensive papers on family planning in Tanzania and decided that my thesis topic was a “done deal.” In January of 2001, I began volunteering at Planned Parenthood of the Blue Ridge (our local affiliate) in order to gain both experience and practice in family planning.

As I got to know AHEAD through the application and acceptance process, it became clear to me that family planning was just one minor part of AHEAD’s work – my thesis topic would have to change. I decided to write about volunteerism broadly defined. As I spent two months with AHEAD and then two years working on the writing of this thesis, my focus constantly changed, as I struggled to conceive of the project in terms of development, health, volunteerism, and globalization. The final project attempts to use all of these categories to rethink AHEAD.

As I complete this thesis, I have to admit that in many ways AHEAD has changed me, personally. Working in Africa pushed me to apply to the anthropology graduate program at the University of Virginia; practicing healthcare has led me to my current job with Planned Parenthood of the Blue Ridge in Charlottesville and has forced me to articulate my pro-choice stance; and thinking about volunteerism caused me to question the role of westerners in development programs worldwide.

I leave this project with more questions than answers, plans to return to Tanzania for dissertation research on HIV, mining, and neocolonialism, and with great appreciation for the people that have helped me through this process. My chair, Gary Downey, Professor of Science and Technology Studies at Virginia Tech, has pushed me to follow through with this project even when it has seemed impossible. Committee member, Saul Halfon, Assistant Professor of

Science and Technology Studies at Virginia Tech encouraged me to be more articulate in my discussions of development and family planning. Jan Nespor, Associate Professor of Teaching and Learning at Virginia Tech, offered me the tools to think about writing ethnography. Courses at Virginia Tech with Charles Good, Professor Emeritus of Geography, and John Browder, Professor of Urban Affairs and Planning, aided in my thinking about health and development, respectively. Courses at the University of Virginia with Peter Metcalf, Professor of Anthropology and Hanan Sabea, Assistant Professor of Anthropology have greatly enhanced my theoretical positioning. My husband, Brad Belo, provided me with both moral and technical support throughout my project. I also appreciate the support of my parents, Beth and Patrick Nichols, my brother, Patrick, as well as the Roblaski and Simkins-Belo families, and my colleagues in both the Virginia Tech STS and UVA Anthropology departments. Thanks to David Strohl for his essential help at the last minute. Mama and Baba Williams provided me with the opportunity to travel to Tanzania with AHEAD. The AHEAD staff and Summer 2001 volunteers were responsive to my questions, comments, and concerns – thank you for your time and commitment to my project!

Table of Contents

	Abstract	ii
	Preface	iii
	Table of Contents	v
	Tables and Figures	vi
1	Introduction	
	<i>Self-Reflections on the Development of the Project</i>	1
	<i>The AHEAD Founding Tale</i>	2
	<i>Theoretical Influences</i>	4
	<i>Methodology</i>	6
2	Weighing Babies, Planning Families: AHEAD as a Primary Health Care Project	
	<i>Introduction</i>	9
	<i>The Tanzanian Health Care System: Prevention through Primary Care</i>	9
	<i>Narrowing the Health and Human Services Lens – the Meatu District</i>	15
	<i>The AHEAD Project and Health in Meatu</i>	19
	<i>Medical Pluralism in Health Outreach</i>	21
	<i>Equipment Unnecessary: Nutritional Counseling and Antenatal Care</i>	27
	<i>From Family Planning to Child Spacing</i>	28
3	Does Development Have to Be a Dirty Word? Water and Technology Transfer in Meatu	
	<i>Introduction</i>	36
	<i>Unpacking ‘Development’: Theory and Critiques</i>	36
	<i>Meatu as a “Site” for Development: Reconciling Self- Help and Development</i>	43
	<i>Technology Transfer: The Fight for Safe Water</i>	45
	<i>Conclusion</i>	54
4	Volunteer Capital: Globalization on the Ground	
	<i>Introduction</i>	57
	<i>Conceptualizing Volunteerism Theoretically</i>	57
	<i>Globalization as a Theory Set</i>	63
	<i>From Work to Kutemba: The Volunteer Experience</i>	66
	<i>Conclusions -- Volunteers as Agents of Globalization</i>	74
5	Conclusion	
	<i>The Argument</i>	76
	<i>Avenues for Future Research</i>	78
	References	79

Tables and Figures

Table 2.1: Select Indicators for Tanzania, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and the USA	11
Figure 2.1: The Tanzanian Healthcare System (2000)– Government Facilities Only	14
Figure 2.2: Green Star Family Planning Logo	29
Table 2.2: Knowledge and Use of Contraceptive Methods	33
Table 3.1: Economic Development Models	37
Table 3.2: Microbe Pasteurization Temperatures	48
Figure 3.1: WAPI Indicator	48
Table 4.1: Non-Altruistic Reasons for Volunteering With AHEAD	70