

I used to hate French People

Alexander "Wilhelm" Werth
Reformed Francophile

I used to hate French people. As a young denizen of the internet, I spent time in circles that enjoyed ragging on the country and its citizens, and those sentiments festered into my own twisted anger at people I'd never even met. I jeered in history classes, bullied internet strangers, hell, once I bought a \$6.95 flag just to burn it in my yard and spit on the ashes. You'd be forgiven for thinking a Frenchman baguette-shanked my childhood dog, the way I spoke of these people.

One family trip showed me otherwise. The moment I stepped off the train in Lyon-Part-Dieu, I was inescapably immersed in a world of kindness and generosity. Goodness me, every coffee house patron, every polyglot museum tour guide, even (especially) the old farmer grandparents who sat us down for dinner in their own home. I get misty thinking of them, how warm they were to a family of strangers with a misguided teenager in tow. I had been taught to hate this name, this concept of a people, and the whole nation of human beings I directed my ire at still took me in with open arms. It took three days to prove everything I thought I'd known for the last five years wrong.

To French people, I deeply apologize. I regret how much of my life I've devoted to baseless hatred of your beautiful, grand, welcoming country. My tirades were insensitive and disrespectful, coming from a place of willful misunderstanding, and for all that, I am sorry. And in coming to this awareness, I've been incredibly privileged to learn so much more about myself, and about you all, and that has taken me to a very special place of understanding. If there is one lesson about the human condition to take from this editorial, let it be this:

Parisians fucking suck.

I'm sorry I ever sullied the name of France with those motherfuckers. On that trip I had the great misfortune of taking "just one afternoon stop, because we have to" in Paris. From about three hours there, I discarded my misguided, directionless hate for a revitalized and healthily educated one. They are unfathomably rude, disrespectful of all other lifeforms, and all guilty of never having given up that French aristocracy they obviously dearly miss. I'm so proud for having grown up, for having found the true people who deserve my ire. Old Farmer Gérard, may your days be peaceful. Everyone else, let's party like it's 1789.

Overwhelmed by Irish culture after hearing Kinky Boots once

Robin Notin

My great-grandpa twice removed was Irish

Though I've always considered myself an admirer of Irish culture, I am ashamed to admit I was quite ignorant of its complexities. My appreciation was limited to wearing green on St. Patrick's Day, making offhand comments about leprechauns whenever I saw a rainbow, and eating the occasional potato.

I am ignorant no longer. After being kicked out of Hunt Library when it closed last Friday, I was walking back to my apartment in Oakland when I heard Kinky Boots playing from one of the pubs. It was like a reckoning. Immediately, I was overwhelmed by Irish culture. No longer did I only have a watered down version of Irish culture of leprechauns and four leaf clovers, I was granted an inside look into what Irish culture actually is. I laid in the street, unable to get up, dreaming about spending afternoons in a pub in Dublin, Guinness in hand, watching ships come to port through the fog.

Eventually, I was woken from my stupor when the song ended. I raced back to my apartment to play Kinky Boots in private. I threw out my microwave mashed potatoes, dyed my head red, bought a khaki suit, a flak jacket and a pair of kinky boots.

Now, all I want is to own a farm in rural Ireland. Instead of waking up at 8 AM for 15-213, I want to wake up at dawn to herd my sheep to green pastures with my border collie. Instead of walking through the tunnel system from Gates to Wean, I want to take my Saracen to town through cobble roads.

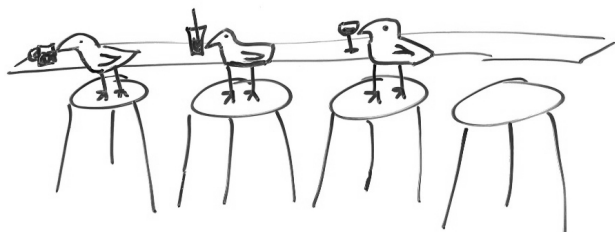
I've become a changed man. I've started eating from Schatz just to try their mashed potatoes and cornbread. I sit in the back of lecture halls, headphones plugged in, listening to Kinky Boots. All I want is to be a part of the jolly Irish culture so beautifully depicted in that song.

...wait. What do you mean it's about the British?

DIY GREEN CARD

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Crowbar

Best countries to study abroad in to study in Russia

"Tyan Rosh", Kanya Dogan
Special Journalistic Operation

Want to study abroad in Russia, but can't because of geopolitics? Check out this list of 10 countries to try instead, which will have you studying abroad in Russia in no time!

10. Ukraine

Give Trump and Putin a few weeks to negotiate, and you'll undoubtedly find yourself within Russian territory.

9. Georgia

Just wait! With a little patience, you'll be part of Russia just the same.

8. Belarus

Does linguistic genocide give you a hard-on? Much like how Western countries like France squashed their national languages in favor of one spoken by the elites, Belarus took this one step further, and made their official one of their bordering country.

7. Transnistria

Do you ever find yourself jacking off to USSR-era aesthetics? Are there tears running down your face mourning what once was? Yes? Then Transnistria is the perfect place for you! The flag is mostly red with a hammer and sickle in the canton, reminiscent of the vexillological layout of former SSR flags. You will find restaurants and bars decorated with soviet memorabilia everywhere you look. This country is closely aligned with Mother Russia, perfect for you!

6. Antarctica

Russia doesn't officially claim territory in Antarctica, but it's been accused of using scientific research as an excuse to exert increasing power over this chilly continent. This is a great place to study if you want to expand the motherland!

5. Poland

They've done it before, and they'll do

it again. You don't have to be a farmer at the coordinates 50.47099, 23.93432 to experience authentic Russian invasion, so long as you incite a little conflict, and don't let NATO get you down.

4. The United States

Looking for a country run by an old, authoritarian man who hates the gays, and which has a history of bullying smaller countries in its sphere of influence, and makes extensive use of questionable mercenaries? You might be just where you wanted already! Check out CMIST's Washington Semester Program, or stay local and build missiles for your own jingoistic paradise!

3. Finland

Want to have to work for your Russian study abroad? Come fight another Winter War, and make it an inside job! If Mr. Molotov's bread baskets call to you, and you never leave the sauna without your trusty Mosin-Nagant, this is the space to watch.

2. Serbia

Want to study in a country with very similar political views as Mama Rossiya, that isn't Belarus? Serbia is a great place for you in the Balkans! Just remember, Kosovo is Serbia, do not let the majority of the world tell you otherwise.

1. Brighton Beach, Brooklyn

For this scenic location right by the Atlantic Ocean, you won't even have to leave the country! Looking down every street, you will see advertisements in Russian regarding injury lawyers, real estate, antique porn, and so much more! Despite being in New York, one could easily get by never having to utter a single word of English. If you ever get tired of being surrounded by 70-year-old Russian-speaking Jews, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Georgians, etc, simply take the Q train to Bushwick where you can take a break with a 12 dollar latte and live that gentrifier lifestyle.

Small European Town Actually Not At All Romantic

Jimothy Yachtsson

Last Great American Tourist

This past summer, Carnegie Mellon ran its annual language immersion program in Italy. For the first time, the program was held in the small Italian town of Cappuccinovecchio, right between that place you forgot from tenth grade history class and that place you forgot from eleventh grade history class. In the past, the program has garnered rave reviews.

"This program got me away from Pittsburgh, as advertised. I hate Pittsburgh, so I'm happy," said one student. "I learned a lot of Italian words, like pizza, pasta, espresso, and merda," reported another. "I love how many naked people there are in Europe," said a third.

But this year, student reviews were less outstanding. "I wanted a romantic summer getaway to a beautiful and more importantly Instagrammable Italian destination," one heartbroken student told Readmè. "Instead, I got heatstroke from the lack of ice in my coffee, couldn't eat the disgusting fake Italian food, and don't even have any STDs to show for it."

The principal complaints from students mostly concern how dreadfully depressing and unromantic the town was. According to Google, Cappuccinovecchio has a population of 400 people, down from a peak of 4,000 people. The current median age sits at 65, which the same heartbroken student reported as "way too high." The student then clarified, "I'm into old people, but not that old."

Readmè has been made aware of one particularly egregious incident in which the cohort of students was invited to a party at a local college student's house. The students were expecting a basement rager with cheap beer and whatever the Italian equivalent to frat bros is, and were disappointed to instead find an 80th birthday party for the local college student's grandmother with artisan wines and a knitting competition. Worst of all, the grandmother didn't even have any sick stories from her time in the mafia.

"If I wanted artisan wines," yet another heartbroken CMU student told Readmè, "I would've gone to... actually yeah I probably would've still gone to Italy. But I like my alcohol cheap and shitty, so there's that."

Among those who traveled to Cappuccinovecchio was a

heterosexual couple. During their interview with Readmè, the pair expressed their disappointment with how unromantic Cappuccinovecchio was, a far cry from the expectations they said were set by the Duolingo owl's sexiness.

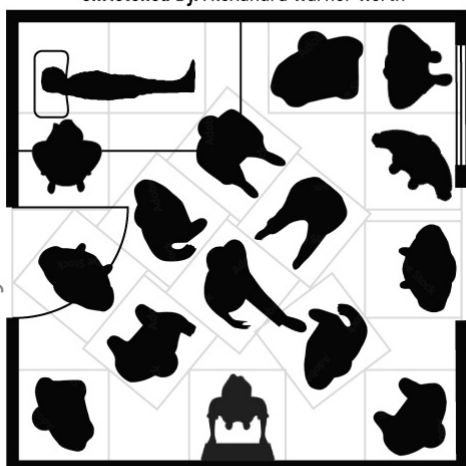
"I thought there'd be baskets of flowers hanging from all the buildings, romantic street music at every corner, and lovely little bakeries," the guy from the heterosexual couple told Readmè. "So you can imagine my disappointment when instead there was graffiti on all of the buildings, and only some of it was vulgar. Plus, the town was deserted. I got banned from the only bakery on day three for calling the owner's daughter hot, and the whole town reeked."

"Wait, I kinda like how the place reeked. Are you not into that kind of thing?" asked the girl from the heterosexual couple angrily, which made the interviewer somewhat uncomfortable. The guy then shook his head, which made the interviewer slightly less uncomfortable. "Well then I don't think we can be a couple anymore," the girl said, and walked out. This made the interviewer very uncomfortable.

Ultimately, the most unromantic aspect of Cappuccinovecchio may have been the dissolution of a couple, which, for the record, Readmè had absolutely nothing to do with. This, combined with general complaints about the program's poor choice of location, led Readmè to investigate further.

After a long, arduous investigation which consisted of sending a singular thirty-word email to the Italian immersion program director, Readmè can now report that the reason for the unromantic Italy immersion program was because of cost-cutting. In past years, the program had been held in Verona, famous for the notably successful romance between Romeo and Juliet. But this year, to make the program cheaper and more accessible to students, the program director lowered costs upon finding that CMU could simply buy one-Euro homes in Cappuccinovecchio. When asked what CMU's plans were for these homes when summer programs are not in session, the program director said they were sitting empty. So dearest reader, if you know of any couples you want to break up, please email jjachtss@andrew.cmu.edu and we'll arrange for a positively unromantic trip to Italy.

Christened By: Alexandra Warner Werth



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