

2019HartMadison-abstract

## Abstract

I went on a study abroad that became more than a study abroad. My time in France became a time of reflecting on my relationships, values, and mental health. In this creative nonfiction piece, I explore the significance of my time in France to gain confidence, build meaningful friendships, grapple with my religious upbringing, overcome anxiety from conflicts with my step-dad, and eventually break off my engagement. The memoir moves between the narrative of arriving and adjusting to France and my reflection on the familial and religious pressures that fostered my struggle with depression and created a need for me to get away and explore my identity outside of my Midwestern bubble.

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