

Mpls STAR TRIBUNE LETTERS

2/19/2019

I'm 60 years old and still have never been to Paris. But when I do go — and I know I will — I look forward to seeing beautifully dressed Parisian women in the latest fashion. I look forward to Parisian bistro food and rude Parisian waiters. I look forward to seeing men wearing berets and smoking cigarettes. Why do we want a world without borders? Why do we want a world where every country is a conglomerate of worldwide cultures? I don't want to see women in burqas in Paris! Why do we want France to look like Saudi Arabia? Why do we want America to morph into Mexico? What is wrong with valuing every country's unique culture on its own? I want to visit other countries to experience other countries.

What is wrong with saying: If you want to live in a country, then adopt that country as your own. Don't continue your culture — to the extent of demanding consideration from your adopted host country in accommodating the same way of life and customs that you left — including the language. If you left it for something else, that's your choice. But do not go to a country and expect that country to accommodate the culture that you walked away from. Otherwise, stay home.

If you want your culture, then stay in your country. If your country has become unsafe, then retake it, don't abandon it. Rise up and retake your country. Rise up and demand the things you are seeking out in other countries. Because I can be pretty sure that whatever country you want to come to has been through a revolution to make it the culture it is. And if nothing else — that needs to be respected.

HOLLY MOORE, Minneapolis

2/22/2019

IMMIGRATION AND ASSIMILATION

It took courage for writer to express doubts that so many of us have

Thank you for publishing a Feb. 19 letter writer's opinion against a "world without borders ... where every country is a conglomerate of worldwide cultures." It's brave of her to express what so many of us think but haven't written for fear of nasty, negative feedback, hoping someone else would speak for us, or because we may have thought we were alone in our thinking. I'm not sure I could have said everything as effectively as she with so few words.

We are our own country — we have our own Constitution, our own laws, our own language, our own holidays, and have suffered our own revolution, and all of that makes us uniquely the United States of America. We want to keep it this way. We will intelligently continue to improve what needs to be improved, but we want to be us — beautiful, welcoming, allowing as many freedoms as possible to citizens with respect for the rights of others.

DOROTHY OCHIS, Eagan

IMMIGRATION AND BORDERS

Letter writer wants homogeneity, but how is cultural variety wrong?

Oh, my. I was stunned to read a Feb. 19 letter (<http://www.startribune.com/readers-write-distracted-driving-conversion-therapy-immigration-and-borders-national-emergency-edina-schools-and-valentine-s-day/506013322/>) writer's comments about wanting to go to Paris and see men in berets smoking cigarettes and stylish Parisian women in the latest fashions. She made it clear she did not want to have her sensibilities offended by seeing women in burqas. She wondered why France has to look like Saudi Arabia. I've been to both Paris and Saudi Arabia, and I can assure her that Paris does not look like Saudi Arabia. When I was in Paris, perhaps I did pass a woman in a burqa, while walking down a stylish avenue, but I didn't notice. I was too busy looking at the wedding-cake architecture, the flowers spilling out of window boxes and the artfully arranged pastel macaroons in pâtisserie windows. I would love for the letter writer to explain how seeing a burqa-wearing woman in Paris would negatively affect her life.

She went on to say "do not go to a country and expect that country to accommodate the culture that you walked away from." I daresay if the Indians meeting the Pilgrims as they disembarked the Mayflower were as rabidly opposed to immigrants as some of our citizens are today, we would have been sent back whence we came and would still be speaking with a British accent. The letter writer seems worried about losing her culture. We are the very immigrants who all but wiped out an entire culture. Ponder that for a moment.

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JAYNE PETERSON, MINNEAPOLIS

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I advise the Feb. 19 letter writer to read an article (<http://www.startribune.com/as-his-body-gives-out-aim-co-founder-clyde-bellecourt-keeps-his-eye-on-the-fight/506021162/>) in the Minnesota section of the same day's paper about Clyde Bellecourt, a Native American activist, to educate herself on what we have done and continue to do to the original inhabitants of this land ("His body is weary, but activist soldiers on"). Ours is a culture with a long history of racism. Not everything about one's culture is noble and to be supported.

JENNIE HAKES, AITKIN, MINN.

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The Feb. 19 letter spoke out against immigrants coming to America and bringing their culture with them. Instead, the writer recommended that citizens rise up and "retake" their country, "don't abandon it." The writer might want to check in with the citizens of Syria to see if that approach actually works.

MICHAEL MEYERS, ST. PAUL