

CBAD 402 Reflections on Germany

(a collection of some of the reflections about Germany from trip participants)

"I feel like I am in a maze sometimes [with all the doors on every room closed all the time]. ... I have never felt so out of control in all my life – no cell phone, no car, thank God I have a computer. I was feeling a little in the rejection phase because everything was awkward and new.... I am picking up a little bit of German (it's a good thing)... The presentations are really long and detailed by the students that they kind of lost my interest.... I am becoming very comfortable around the family. It makes me want to learn German... [The family] has been so nice to me this week. I am really impressed with their hospitality. As much as I hated being away from the group for a week, I am glad I got to experience the culture on my own with this family."

"I got a chance to meet people from Poland, Sweden, Finland, and Germany."

"The little kids that swarmed the place [the youth hostel in St. Goar] made me nuts!"

"It was cool to see different drugs made for different countries [at Boehringer Ingelheim]."

"I felt very stressed about the presentation. ... We procrastinated a little with our project because it was just too hard to get into the "we have school work to do" mode when there were so many interesting things that we wanted to do. The German students went into much more detail and they had a lot more information in their presentations... Overall there were no huge differences between the German and US presentations. I still can't get used to the way the Germans knock on the desks instead of applauding after a presentation is made. The practice seems odd to me, but I guess clapping seems odd to me."

"I would rather lose money than lose the trust of my customers." While we were at Bosch Siemens we heard this quote by Robert Bosch, the founder of the Bosch part of the partnership. The reason I am including this quote is that I personally want to remember it and I think it is something that every successful business owner should know."

"I was so sad to leave my host family, and this is strange, because before I met them, I couldn't wait for this week to be over. I felt uncomfortable of the thought of meeting and spending a whole week with the German family."

"We all ate a LOT of chocolate."

"The youth hostel [in St. Goar] was amazing. It was up on a hill near a beautiful castle on the Rhine River! We met all the professors and students and played a silly game to remember names and it worked!"

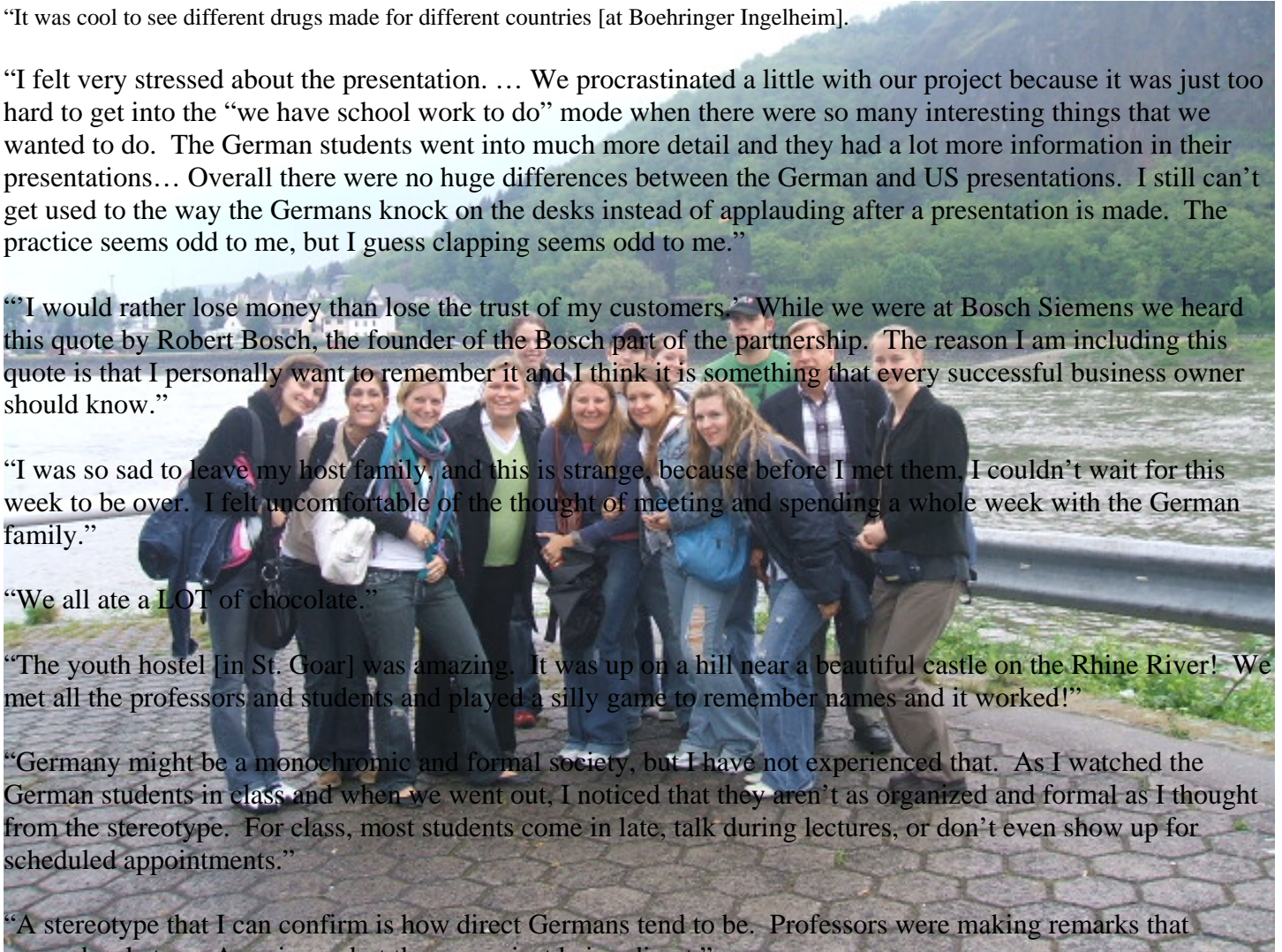
"Germany might be a monochromic and formal society, but I have not experienced that. As I watched the German students in class and when we went out, I noticed that they aren't as organized and formal as I thought from the stereotype. For class, most students come in late, talk during lectures, or don't even show up for scheduled appointments."

"A stereotype that I can confirm is how direct Germans tend to be. Professors were making remarks that seemed rude to us Americans, but they were just being direct."

"What impressed me about both the Fachhochschule and the businesses that we visited in Germany is their environmental friendliness."

"Our European classmates are wonderful and there is a great mixture of them – Polish, Swedish, Finnish, German, and us. It was interesting to see them interact with one another."

"On our visit to Dachau [outside Munich] ...so much sad information...I forced myself to watch the videos....It is important that people see these atrocities... I think that the whole idea of a concentration camp and all the atrocities that have happened there, are incomprehensible to our generation...I thought I would be sad after



leaving... but instead I was angry with how weak the human nature is and I was angry that people fail ...to open their minds and their ears to others' ideas but instead just concentrate on their own version of truth imposing it as the ultimate truth for everyone."

"I really liked riding my bicycle around (Rheinbach). It was very quick and good exercise."

"It seems to me that the Germans are very orderly and plan things far in advance. They are generally very efficient. They tend to have fewer work hours... also they don't mix work and play. They leave on time and don't seem to take work home."

"I loved Bacharach, it was a such a cute and quaint little town, I loved it."

"I really liked the presentation at Telekom. I think I may want to work for a company like this."

"The medieval dinner [in St. Goar] was a lot of fun. I liked the stories. We all had a really good time and laughed a lot."

"We completed a case study with the German students. I found how we interacted more interesting than the case study itself. We thought on the same wavelength for many of the questions. I felt at ease and enjoyed working with them. I really enjoyed the afternoon international project management class with Prof. Maier. His class explained why we felt the way we did in this foreign country. It made what we were going through that much easier. I felt less crazy."

"Boat ride on the Rhine was great, but weather was not optimal... we could have gone inside, but where's the fun in that? How many more times in my life will I take a boat down the Rhine River with my friends and see the medieval buildings and vineyards?"

"In many ways, German business and classroom culture is very similar to Americans', but in many other ways it isn't. I think that the Germans enjoy their small breaks and retreats from work more than Americans do."

"I spent a lot of my free time at night with my host family. I got a feel for how a modern day German family lives, works, and raises a child. This gave me a grasp on German culture. Just interacting with them and with the German students really made me realize how small the world is becoming."

