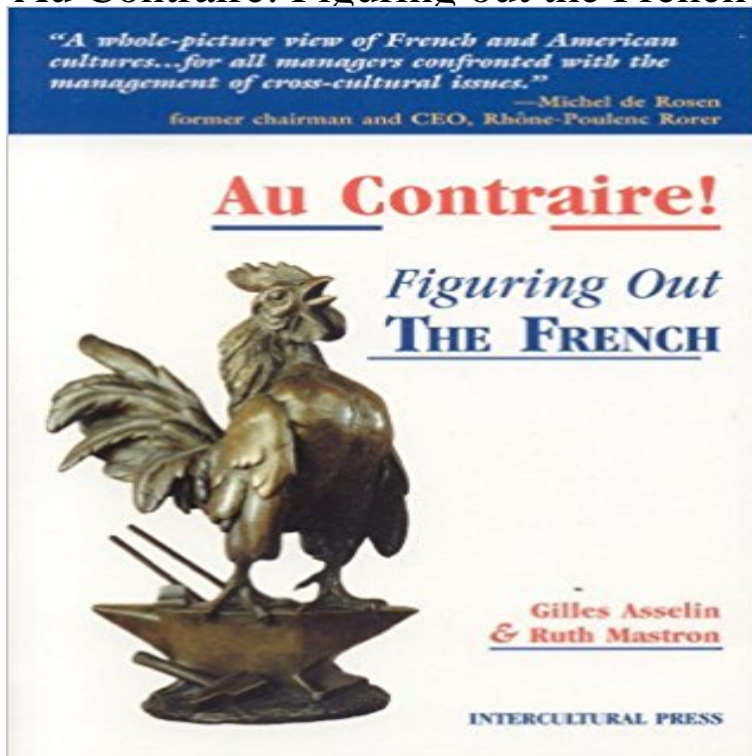


Au Contraire: Figuring out the French



When Coca-Cola entered the French market with a hard-core bottom-line management style, they were met with boycotts in cafes and supermarkets. At the launch of Euro Disney in Paris, Mickey Mouse was greeted by angry protestors hurling tomatoes and eggs. As a culture, the French are fiercely independent yet romantic, conservative yet avant-garde, rational yet emotional. Written for anyone interested in or interacting with the French, *Au Contraire! Figuring Out the French* unearths the often-invisible cultural forces that govern behavior. Gilles Asselin and Ruth Mastron draw upon their own experiences as consultants and trainers, as well as that of expatriate students and professionals, to offer the best and most useful analysis and advice on French-American intercultural relations. Going beyond the obvious, this bilingual and bicultural author team explores what lies behind what we see: the assumptions, attitudes, patterns of thought and beliefs that make the French so French. In a global world filled with multinational mergers and international partnerships, *Au Contraire!* provides context and perspective on what happens when Americans and the French come together at work, at home, and in any social setting, touching on issues like education, play, friendship, romance and politics. They highlight the dynamics of working and managing across the French and American cultural divide with an in-depth case study of how pharmaceutical giant Rhone-Poulenc Rorer overcame challenges by fostering cross-cultural teamwork. With a quick and useful guide to social etiquette and professional guidelines for managers working in the United States and in France, *Au Contraire!* provides critical tools to develop creative and appropriate responses to any situation, based on a deep understanding of the unique dynamics of these two cultures.

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