

# The geography of bliss by eric weiner

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Midterm Great Britain Eric Weiner's book *The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World* is an interesting and thoughtful tale of travel, geopolitics, sarcasm, and others. The basic premise of the book is about Weiner's wish to find the reasons for people's happiness or lack of happiness in the world. He visits around ten countries and tries to explore how each country and its people define and pursue happiness. Although, the theme of happiness is predominant throughout the book, Weiner also explores other themes like multiculturalism. This theme of multiculturalism is visible in the sections of the book that dealt with the countries of Great Britain, Qatar, India, and others. When one focuses on how Weiner discussed about multiculturalism in Great Britain, it gives interesting and insightful perspectives.

In the chapter titled "Great Britain", Weiner goes to the city of Slough, which is located near London in U. K. In association with BBC, Weiner conducts a happiness experiment in Slough by taking around fifty volunteers and making them part of an twelve weeks happiness regime. Apart from finding the results and interpreting it, Weiner makes certain key inputs regarding multiculturalism.

At the outset, he brings out how multiculturalism has given both advantages and disadvantages to Slough and Great Britain as a whole. Great Britain is home to people from various ethnicities and that has given certain advantages particularly in the enrichment of cuisine, but has also led to certain socio-political issues. Slough, like much of Britain, is multicultural. On the one hand, this welcome news. The immigrants have spiced up bland British cuisine, as well as the bland British personality. On the other hand, this influx of immigrants has brought problems. Most notably, Islamic

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terrorists (Weiner 326-327). Although, Weiner's latter perspective of how immigration has led to Islamic terrorism might be controversial, it cannot be totally overlooked.

On the other hand, as mentioned above, influx of immigrants has accentuated the diversity of the country and has even contributed to a better understanding of cultures of other countries. That is, as immigrants from other countries are living in high numbers in many localities in Great Britain, including in Slough, it provides the native British people more opportunities to interact and socialize with them thereby understanding and appreciating other cultures more. Weiner even goes to the extent of stating that by being in Slough and experiencing cultures of other countries optimally, Slough residents need not go to the immigrant's parent countries to experience their respective culture first-hand. Its multicultural, and Richard figures that's a good thing. He can go to India or Pakistan or Poland without ever leaving Slough (Weiner 340).

From the above analysis, it is possible to state that apart from the theme of happiness, Weiner has focused on the theme of multiculturalism quite prominently in his book. When one focuses on Weiner's thoughts about multiculturalism in Great Britain, it is evident that he brings out both the positives and the negatives of multiculturalism. Weiner's thoughts on multiculturalism more or less reflect the prevailing mindset among the people of Great Britain regarding the issues of immigrants and multiculturalism.

#### Work Cited

Weiner, Eric. *The Geography of Bliss*. London: Transworld Publishers, 2008. Print.

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