



The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World

By Eric Weiner

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"Laugh. Think. Repeat. Repeatedly. **If someone told me this book was this good, I wouldn't have believed them.**"

--Po Bronson, author of *What Should I Do With My Life?*

"Think *Don Quixote* with a dark sense of humor and a taste for hashish and you begin to grasp Eric Weiner, the modern knight-errant of this mad, sad, wise, and witty quest across four continents. I won't spoil the fun by telling if his mission succeeds, except to say that **happiness is reading a book as entertaining as this.**"

--Tony Horwitz, author of *Confederates in the Attic*

Part foreign affairs discourse, part humor, and part twisted self-help guide, *The Geography of Bliss* takes the listener from America to Iceland to India in search of happiness, or, in the crabby author's case, moments of "un-unhappiness." The book uses a beguiling mixture of travel, psychology, science and humor to investigate not what happiness is, but where it is. Are people in Switzerland happier because it is the most democratic country in the world? Do citizens of Qatar, awash in petrodollars, find joy in all that cash? Is the King of Bhutan a visionary for his initiative to calculate Gross National Happiness? Why is Asheville, North Carolina so damn happy? With engaging wit and surprising insights, Eric Weiner answers those questions and many others, offering travelers of all moods some interesting new ideas for sunnier destinations and dispositions.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Weiner's diverting travel memoir tells the tale of a self-professed grump who sets out to find where the most contented people in the world live. The major problem is that the good idea didn't pan out. Weiner visits dozens of countries including India, Iceland and Bhutan, which have their share of socioeconomic problems. Yet Weiner deems these places as having the happiest people in the world, not truly understanding their troubles, but generalizing on the whole. The narration is also a disappointment, with Weiner slip-sliding his way through his own journal writings without passion or enthusiasm and occasional pronunciation problems. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

If there's one truth that emerged from reviewers' various takes on *The Geography of Bliss*, it's that happiness is subjective. Every critic seemed to find something that really irked him or her about this book: Weiner's persona seems affected, he indulges in "psychobabble," he remains aloof about himself, he comes across as an obnoxious reporter. Yet everyone seemed to enjoy his book, admiring Weiner's original approach to the subject, his balance of research and experience, and the characters that illustrate the lessons on happiness Weiner accumulates during his journeys. In short, all the critics' happiness was alike, but they were also all unhappy in their own way. (Sorry, Tolstoy.) FYI: Weiner lives in Miami, Florida.

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Review

"Part travelogue, part personal-discovery memoir and all sustained delight, this wise, witty ramble reads like Paul Theroux channeling David Sedaris on a particularly good day..... Fresh and beguiling."

(**Kirkus Reviews**)

"Laugh. Think. Repeat. Repeatedly. If someone told me this book was this good, I wouldn't have believed them." (*Po Bronson, author of What Should I Do With My Life?*)

"With one single book, Eric Weiner has flushed Bill Bryson down a proverbial toilet, and I say that lovingly. By turns hilarious and profound, this is the kind of book that could change your life. The relationship between place and contentment is an ineffable one, and Weiner cuts through the fog with a big, powerful light. *The Geography of Bliss* is no smiley-face emoticon, it's a Winslow Homer." (*Henry Alford, author of Municipal Bondage and Big Kiss*)

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Robert Stitt:

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