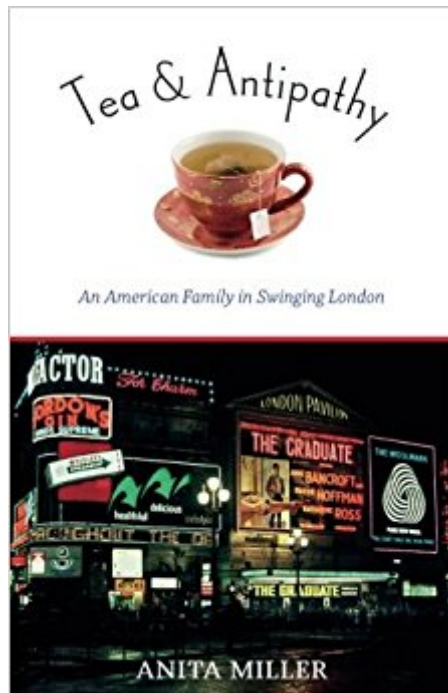




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Tea & Antipathy: An American Family In Swinging London



Synopsis

Tea & Antipathy is a delightfully hilarious and true account of one American family's summer in the posh London neighborhood of Knightsbridge in 1965. Capturing the helpless feeling that living in a foreign city often brings, the book recounts how the Millers met a wide variety of memorable characters from all social classes, including Mrs. Grail the Irish cleaning woman, who was convinced that their home was haunted and who hated the English; Basil Goldbrick, a businessman from Manchester; and Basil's clever wife Daisy, who resented Americans. Told in a gently sardonic tone, this story provides insight on what London was like during the Swinging Sixties and what it was like to uproot a family for an adventurous summer abroad.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"An entertaining book that will be enjoyed by anyone who has ever had a vacation go awry."

—[Library Journal](#)

Anita Miller is editorial director of Academy Chicago Publishers, Ltd, which she founded with her husband in 1975. She has written, coauthored, or edited more than 75 books. She lives in Glencoe, Illinois.

I am puzzled. I don't know what to think about this book. Probably the most important thing is that it happened 50 years ago. It was another time and another world. Ms. Miller certainly had a miserable experience. Everyone she met was horrible. Everyone. I am always suspicious when someone

ALWAYS has problems. It makes me wonder what she was doing wrong. Yet her landlady was clearly a true horror. As I said, I am puzzled. I have been going to the UK regularly for nearly 35 years. I have been a back-backing student. I have been a business traveler on an expense account. I have stayed in dumps in Bayswater and Bloomsbury (it must have been run by the landlady's twin sister); in five-star hotels; in boutique hotels; and in rental flats in Kensington and Chelsea. I have run around the countryside north, south, east, and west and have visited cities other than London and areas of London outside of the city center. I have met a cross-section of people and had my share of culture-shock moments ("no, you may not have more than 2 ice cubes in your drink"). I have met jerks and I have met charming helpful people. I don't recognize the world Ms. Miller wrote about. Maybe it was so. Maybe it was not. Maybe it passed away 30 years ago. Still it is an interesting snapshot of one family's experience in another time. I do wonder how much this tale has been honed over the years to fit a narrative. Is she still an Anglophile or not? I would say not. I would say that she is as prejudiced against them as they were against her. I am puzzled.

I keep debating (mostly with me myself and I and to a lesser extent with my wife) as to whether this tome was written as a "tongue-in-cheek" story or was written dead seriously. One thing it does show is how much the overall British culture has evolved over the past 50 years. One wonders if this evolution is/was as a result of American TV shows or the Internet or what. I found it fun reading, and continued to wonder how I would have reacted in many of the situations described by the author.

Loved it! Could picture the whole thing.

As Americans we tend to think of London in the mid-60's as a swinging place. You know The Beatles, Carnaby Street, the British Invasion. But the reality was that this was only a fraction of British society, most of it wassail very traditional, unwelcoming to Americans, and still reeling from the austerities of the War Years. That was bad news for the Miller family who decide to spend a summer in London with their three boys while Dad comes to grip with his struggling clipping service branch. The title gets it right. The family is not welcomed. Their landlady has locked or spirited away every nice bit of furniture or household linens in the Kensington house. She then, supposedly, leaves the country. Requests for help to her lawyer go unanswered. The people they meet, mostly through Jordan Miller's job, are cold and unfriendly. The weather is cold and gloomy, especially in contrast to a Chicago summer. Even Brits they knew back in the States have become penny-pinching depressives. While one would hope that these characters would come off as lovable

eccentrics, they don't. They are just small-minded, shoddy, and rude. As a result I found the book very hard to take, almost as hard to take as it must have been to live. The book is improved by the Irish cleaning lady who helps as she can. It's also greatly improved when they aren't dealing with people of their own class, but instead venture out into the unknown, just the family, or are dealing with other Americans. Unhappily most of these encounters happen in the last quarter of the book. Culture class is always a good subject for memoirs, I just wish this had been less unpleasant.

I agree with a couple of the above reviews. I must say that I wondered why on earth this woman dredged up these largely unhappy memories about ONE summer that took place over 50 years ago. What is the issue that brings these 52-year old memories to the fore, and wasn't there anything of cultural or intellectual value that took place? Some of us in her age bracket, like myself, spent summers abroad in the early 60's. Things were not ideal, but you took away cultural experiences that last a lifetime. It was a unique time in history, one that may not have been luxurious by US standards, but was in a way, much more interesting culturally. This is a laundry list of complaints. Even the title of the book is dismal.

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