

Does a population's happiness come from its gene pool?

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For as much time as Americans spend saying it is the greatest country on Earth, a whole lot of people worry about creating safe spaces where free expression is not allowed, or protesting the behavior of people they don't like.

It could be that happiness is just not in American genes.

A paper in the *Journal of Happiness Studies* correlates the happiness of citizens with a specific allele involved in sensory pleasure and pain reduction.

Michael Minkov of the Varna University of Management in Bulgaria, and Michael Bond of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University believe genetic factors might contribute to national differences in happiness.

They used data from three waves of the nationally representative World Values Survey (2000 – 2014). They calculated the average national percentages of respondents who unambiguously reported being “very happy”. The authors saw a strong correlation between a nation's happiness and the presence of the A allele in the fatty acid amide hydrolase (FAAH) gene variant rs324420 in its citizens' genetic make-up. This allele helps prevent the chemical degradation of anandamide, a substance that enhances sensory pleasure and helps to reduce pain.

Nations with the highest prevalence of the A allele are quite clearly also those who perceive themselves happiest. These include Ghana and Nigeria in West Africa, and northern Latin American nations, such as Mexico and Columbia, whose citizens are of Amerindian or mixed Euro-American descent.

Read full, original post: [Why Americans Can Never Be Happy ? Genes?](#)