

ANGLAIS

TRADUCTION DE FRANÇAIS EN ANGLAIS

- Et cette valise noire, c'est quoi ?
- Rien ne t'échappe !
- Non, j'écoute, c'est tout.
- C'est une valise qui appartenait à Maman, elle y rangeait toutes ses lettres, tous ses souvenirs. En fait, je crois que cette valise contient l'essentiel de sa vie.
- Comment cela, « tu crois » ?
- Cette valise était un grand mystère. Toute la maison était à lui, sauf le placard où elle était rangée. Interdit formel d'accès. « Et je t'assure que je n'aurais pas pris le risque ! »
- Où est-elle ?
- Dans le bureau à côté.
- Et tu n'es jamais revenu pour l'ouvrir ? Je ne peux pas le croire !
- Elle devait contenir toute la vie de sa mère, il n'avait jamais voulu précipiter ce moment, il s'était dit qu'il fallait être adulte et réellement prêt à prendre le risque de l'ouvrir pour comprendre. Devant les plissements de front sceptiques de Lauren, il avoua : « Bon, la vérité c'est que j'ai toujours eu la trouille. »
- Pourquoi ?
- Je ne sais pas, peur que cela change l'image que j'ai gardée d'elle, peur d'être envahi par le chagrin.
- Va la chercher !
- Arthur ne bougea pas. Elle insista pour qu'il aille la chercher, il n'avait pas à avoir peur.

Marc Lévy, *Et si c'était vrai...*, Robert Laffont, 2000

(208 mots)

ANGLAIS

TRADUCTION D'ANGLAIS EN FRANÇAIS

DORA GREENFIELD left her husband because she was afraid of him. She decided six months later to return to him for the same reason. The absent Paul, haunting her with letters and telephone bells and imagined footsteps on the stairs had begun to be the greater torment. Dora suffered from guilt, and with guilt came fear. She decided at last that the persecution of his presence was to be preferred to the persecution of his absence.

Dora was still very young, though she vaguely thought of herself as past her prime. She came of a lower middle-class London family. Her father had died when she was nine years old, and her mother, with whom she had never got on very well, had married again. When Dora was eighteen she entered the Slade school of art with a scholarship, and had been there two years when she encountered Paul. The role of an art student suited Dora. It was indeed the only role she had ever been able whole-heartedly to play. She had been an ugly and wretched schoolgirl. As a student she grew plump and peach-like and had a little pocket money of her own, which she spent on big multi-coloured skirts and jazz records and sandals. At that time, which although it was only three years ago now seemed unimaginably remote, she had been happy. Dora, who had so lately discovered in herself a talent for happiness, was the more dismayed to find that she could be happy neither with her husband nor without him.

Iris Murdoch, *The Bell*, Penguin, 1986

(256 mots)

ANGLAIS

Expression écrite 1ère langue

Lire soigneusement le texte ci-dessous :

One of the most striking things about the document that Americans celebrate with such gusto on July 4th is that so much of it is dull. [...] There are lists of complaints about the administration of the courts and the quartering of British troops. [...] But all this tedium is more than made up for by a single sentence—the one about “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”.

The sentence was remarkable at the time—a perfect summary, in a few pithy words, of exactly what was new about the new republic. Previous countries had been based on common traditions and a collective identity. Previous statesmen had been exercised by things like the common good and public virtue [...]. The Founding Fathers were the first politicians to produce the explosive combination of individual rights and the pursuit of happiness. It remains equally remarkable today, still the best statement, 230 years after it was written, of what makes America American. [...]

Everywhere you look in contemporary America you see a people engaged in that pursuit. You can see it in work habits. Americans not only work harder than most Europeans (they work an average of 1,731 hours a year compared with an average of 1,440 for Germans). They also endure lengthy commute (who cares about a couple of hours a day in a car when you have a McMansion to come home to?). You can see it in geographical mobility. About 40m of them move house every year. They are remarkably willing to travel huge distances in pursuit of everything from bowling conventions to factory outlets. You can see it in religion: Americans relentlessly shop around for the church that most suits their spiritual needs. And you can see it in the country's general hopefulness: two-thirds of Americans are optimistic about the future.

Since Americans are energetic even in deconstructing their own founding principles, there is no shortage of people who have taken exception to the happiness pursuit. They range from conservatives such as Robert Bork, who think the phrase encapsulates the “emptiness at the heart of American ideology”, to liberals who think that it is a justification for an acquisitive society.

One criticism is that the pursuit is self-defeating. The more you pursue the illusion of happiness the more you sacrifice the real thing. The flip side of relentless mobility is turmoil and angst, broken marriages and unhappy children. Americans have less job security than ever before. They even report having fewer close friends than a couple of decades ago. And international studies of happiness suggest that people in certain poor countries, for instance Nigeria and Mexico, are apparently happier than people in America.

Another criticism is that Americans have confused happiness with material possessions [...]. Do all those pairs of Manolo Blahnik shoes really make you happy? Or are they just a compensation for empty lives à la “Sex in the City”?

If opinion polls on such matters mean anything—and that is dubious—they suggest that both these criticisms are flawed. A 2006 Pew Research Centre study, “Are we happy yet?” claims that 84% of Americans are either “very happy” (34%) or “pretty happy” (50%). The Harris Poll’s 2004 “feel good index” found that 95% are pleased with their homes and 91% are pleased with their social lives. The Pew polls show that money does indeed go some way towards buying happiness: nearly half (49%) of Americans with annual incomes of more than \$100,000 say they are very happy compared with just 24% of people with incomes of \$30,000 or less. They also suggest that Americans’ religiosity makes them happier still: 43% of Americans who attend religious services once a week or more report being very happy compared with 31% who attend once a month or less and 26% of people who attend seldom or never.

The pursuit of happiness explains all sorts of peculiarities of American life: from the \$700m that is spent on self-help books every year to the irritating dinner guests who will not stop looking at their BlackBerries. It also holds a clue to understanding American politics. Perhaps the biggest reason why the Republicans have proved so successful in recent years is that they have established a huge “happiness gap”. Some 45% of Republicans report being “very happy” compared with just 30% of Democrats. The Democrats may be right to give warning of global warming and other disasters. But are they right to give the impression that they relish all the misery? The people’s party will never regain its momentum unless it learns to relate to the guy on the super-sized patio, happily grilling his hamburgers and displaying his American flag.

The pursuit of happiness may even help to explain the surge of anti-Americanism. Many people dislike America because of its failure to live up to its stated ideals. But others dislike it precisely because it is doing exactly what Jefferson intended. For some Europeans, the pursuit of happiness in the form of monster cars and mansions is objectionable on every possible ground, from aesthetic to ecological. You cannot pursue happiness with such conspicuous enthusiasm without making quite a lot of people around the world rather unhappy.

The Economist, print edition, July 1st, 2006.

Répondre en ANGLAIS aux questions suivantes :

(environ 250 mots pour chaque réponse) :

1. According to the text, to what extent has the United States kept up the spirit of the Declaration of Independence concerning the pursuit of happiness?
Answer the question in your own words.
2. Do you believe it is the pursuit of happiness that sets the American people apart from other nations in the world? Justify your answer.