



# One Million Tiny Plays About Britain

*Craig Taylor*

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## **One Million Tiny Plays About Britain** Craig Taylor

In these snippets of overheard conversations from across the length and breadth of the country, Craig Taylor captures the state we're in with humour and pathos and perfect timing. Laugh-out-loud funny, and sometimes heartbreakingly moving, these tiny plays in which every one of us could have a starring role are little windows into other people's lives that reveal the triumphs, disasters, prejudices, horrors and joys of twenty-first-century life.

## **One Million Tiny Plays About Britain Details**

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Author : Craig Taylor

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# From Reader Review One Million Tiny Plays About Britain for online ebook

## Bev says

What makes us British? The snippets of overheard conversations in this book made me laugh & sometimes shake my head in irritation but I recognised all of the character types portrayed. A quick read but an enjoyable one.

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## Oliver Dawson says

A brilliant book full of actable scenes and monologues.

A real insight into the quirks of British life.

Collated from the authors snippets from the Guardian newspaper.

Every actor should have it to hand, if only to find the humour in it all.

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## Val says

The book is written in the form of scraps of conversation, as if overheard. Sometimes we hear both sides, sometimes only one as on a mobile phone. Few of them are longer than a page and some are much shorter. Several of them are humorous. The overall effect is a funny portrait of a cross-section of British people across ages and social classes.

The style of the book makes it scrappy and it was probably better in its original publication in a newspaper, but it is cleverly composed and executed. Take a peek.

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## Nikki says

Not very impressed by this. It's an interesting sort of concept -- a bit like a fictionalised "overheard in New York" (or wherever), but the selection of which 'plays' to put in was very... unexciting. They do reveal a lot of the prejudices that still exist in Britain -- some readers may feel uncomfortable, seeing themselves exposed, but to be honest I think most of the readers will be more the types who can shake their heads knowingly, believing they don't ever act with prejudice.

I could've predicted the way each of them went, even the ridiculous ones; in a way, that suggests that the observations are 'accurate', if you can use that word of these anecdotes. Still, they also felt very artificial.

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## **Jon says**

I read a review of this book that referred to it as “a toilet book” and I fully agree. This book is ok for a small quick read whilst you in the bathroom but nothing more.

The supposedly overheard conversations are clearly false, and even in making them up the author somehow still fails to make them funny. At best they are mildly amusing but more often than not move more in to a racist, homophobic and general offensive area. I finished the book, simply because I am not one to give up on books, and I had a slight morbid attraction to see what socio-economic group the author would offend in the next play and that kept me going. The author makes full use of lazy stereotypes in compiling this book and to attempt to portray the characters in the book as normal members of the UK population is in itself offensive.

This book just about works as a bathroom book or something on the shelf in a guest room but don't expect to be amazed by it (unless you are a Viz reader!). And don't even get me started on the title, maybe “94 Small Plays...” wouldn't sell as well.

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## **Peter says**

99 hilarious short plays. Each one a two or three page conversation between different characters from around Great Britain. A quick read. The bitter and pithy quality of the plays and the quintessentially modern Britishness of them reminded me a little of the Modern Toss cartoons. A great book to study how to write this kind of understated but funny dialogue. Craig Taylor seems especially good at suggesting with just a few words the way people don't listen to each other or deliberately misinterpret or ignore the words of the person they're talking to. How people only hear what they want to hear and how often this is what makes conversations funny.

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## **Misty says**

Overall Rating: 4/5

Cover: 3.5/5

Interest: 5/5

Blurb: 4.5/5

Content: 4/5

This book was surprisingly good. I'd read an excerpt from Geist magazine the other day, was intrigued, and proceeded to order the book. I was consistantly humoured, interested, and appalled throughout the book. I admit that I was a bit skeptical about how successful this book would be, but I enjoyed it, and would recommend it as an interesting, technical book.

-misty

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## David says

I really enjoyed this book though it didn't take long to finish it. I remember these plays being a daily feature in the Guardian a few years ago. The plays take the form of snippets of overheard conversations. They cover a wide range of scenarios and leave you imagining the events that led to the conversation taking place and what happened afterwards.

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## Sarah says

Eh.. It was ok. The title lies. There are 94.. 95 if you include the one on the back cover.

But like I said in my updates.. Once you've read one, you've read them all. Some were really cool, a couple I thought were clever.. The rest were all samey. And yeah, they were funny, but it was that 'oh, to get to the other side, ha' kind of funny. You find it funny because you feel you are supposed to.

I had to read this for uni, so I stuck with it. But I don't see the point in collating these. They work much better as seperates. Weren't they originally published in a newspaper? Yeah, that makes more sense. I can't imagine these being brought together in a stage production.. I think I'd be washing my hair that night.

"Twas ok.

A solid 3 out of 5.

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## Josh Ang says

These are delightfully short playlets originally featured in standalone pieces in the Guardian newspaper. Collected in one volume, this compilation offers a glimpse of the mundane through the snatches of everyday dialogue around Britain (which the playwright supposedly overheard), which ranges from the uproariously funny to the touchingly tender.

Each of the 94 playlets are numbered, with a short description, and this rather concise introduction works surprisingly well, as the reader launches straight into the midst of the dialogue and discover what the issue is. It could be an insight into the social mores, like the two elderly women who fight to pay for tea at a cafe in Lichfield, till the politeness turns into something of a power struggle.

In another snippet, a young man tries to sell his copy of a Bob Dylan album at a used record shop in Derby, and unwittingly upsets the guy behind the counter, a serious music aficionado who is shocked with his lackadaisical attitude to what he obviously esteems as high art. However, the young man fails to see what the fuss is about:

Tim: Not a big fan of him.

Bill: 'Him'? Sort of like saying you're not a fan of breathing.

Tim: I never heard anything by Breathing.

A businessman, Alan, laments about his foreign domestic help to his friend Gordon. When he refers to her as Latvia, Gordon is surprised, and Alan explains: "I just think it's disrespectful when you don't know how to say someone's name properly. So this works."

In capturing what people say in a direct manner, Taylor manages to reveal how sometimes we say more than we know, and are none the wiser for how transparent and contradictory we are. The plays work because they make an acute observation of how people talk but fail to communicate, or even if they do, they listen only to what they want to, filtering out the rest.

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### **Christine Blachford says**

Really enjoyed this book. I wasn't aware of the fact they came from a newspaper originally, which is only annoying because I think I've been missing out! This is a collection of 94 – not quite a million – exceedingly short plays, some much shorter than the others.

They provide snapshots of conversations around the country, from all walks of life. I think they are fiction, but they could quite easily be real life overhead snippets. Each one is convincing and captivating in a way that leaves you wanting more, but not frustrated. It inspires thoughts of all kinds of interesting characters and could easily be a jumping off point for even more creativity.

I really enjoyed reading the plays, I devoured them over the course of 24 hours. My only complaint is that there aren't more in the book! (That and the fact 94 is a really odd number to finish on!)

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### **Bunny Cavanagh says**

judgemental and bitchy. Most characters have the same voice and it's easy to see the writer's prejudices. A nasty, superficial, tedious book that would never have been published if written by a POC or a woman.

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### **Elle says**

Short enough but gets old really quick. Actually, I lie. It was never that new or interesting to begin with. For a relatively short book this simply took forever to read as a 'dipper' book. I didn't care at all about it and it rarely made me laugh, think or feel any emotions.

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### **Ilse says**

\*2.5 stars

I was actually going with 3 stars but it's just that this book isn't really that interesting. I certainly do not regret reading it but there were only a few plays I actually enjoyed (also there were only 94). Also in my opinion they weren't really plays. I understand why he calls them that but it's more like a conversation you hear when you pass people by. And just like real life, sometimes it's interesting and sometimes it's really not.

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## **Kinga says**

This is just a collection of dialogues which are occasionally funny or original but get old rather quickly. There is a lot of playing on stereotypes and people not meaning what they say and not saying what they mean. There are sprouts of racism, homophobia and just plain ol' nastiness.

There is a man talking on the phone in a supermarket explaining to someone he is just waiting for his suitcase at the airport. There is a woman who refuses to accept her son's homosexuality. There, of course, is a Polish hairdresser who doesn't know what she is doing.

This started as a column in Guardian and you know what? Some things are just not meant to be books. It would've been fine as a column. In a book format it can only be a toilet book. I don't mean it in a bad way. I am not saying you should be using it as a toilet paper. We have complete works of Paulo Coelho for that.

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