

**what brand <are you?>**  
*reconnoitering happiness*

## **Study Guide**

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‘The faithful witness, like Solon and Socrates, Voltaire and Swift, even Christ himself, is at his best when he concentrates on questioning and clarifying and avoids the specialist’s obsession with solutions. He betrays society when he is silent or impenetrable or, worst of all, when he blithely reassures. He is true to himself and to the people when clarity causes disquiet.’

- John Ralston Saul -<sup>1</sup>

# **1** SYNOPSIS

*what brand <are you?>*

”One big chorus line to a modern day tragedy.”  
-Michael Karolyi, Film-maker –

Starring:  
Best-selling Author of *Growth Fetish*: Dr. Clive Hamilton  
Commercials Director: Franco Marinelli  
Group Accounts Director at Saatchi & Saatchi: Mark Green  
Three-year old Tyson Colette  
And more...

Dubbed “a visual rollercoaster through the dizzying world of pop-culture,” and “investigative journalism on party drugs,” by The Sydney Morning Herald’s arts writer Tracey Clement, ‘*what brand are you?*’ is a 30 minute hybrid documentary that explores personal happiness in a consumer society.

In a culture where desires are often confused with needs, we in the west cause ourselves unnecessary unhappiness by holding ourselves up to increasingly higher standards. ‘what brand are you?’ challenges these standards that often seem inescapable, in the hopes of identifying them as largely virtual.

Filmmaker Michael Karoyli says, “in Marlo Bodzick’s unnerving, suggestive and collective clichéd work, all the information is visually presented through the schema of, multi-screened, multi-layered, multi-this, multi-that, with an orchestra of sound bites blood-let as interviews and thumping music.”

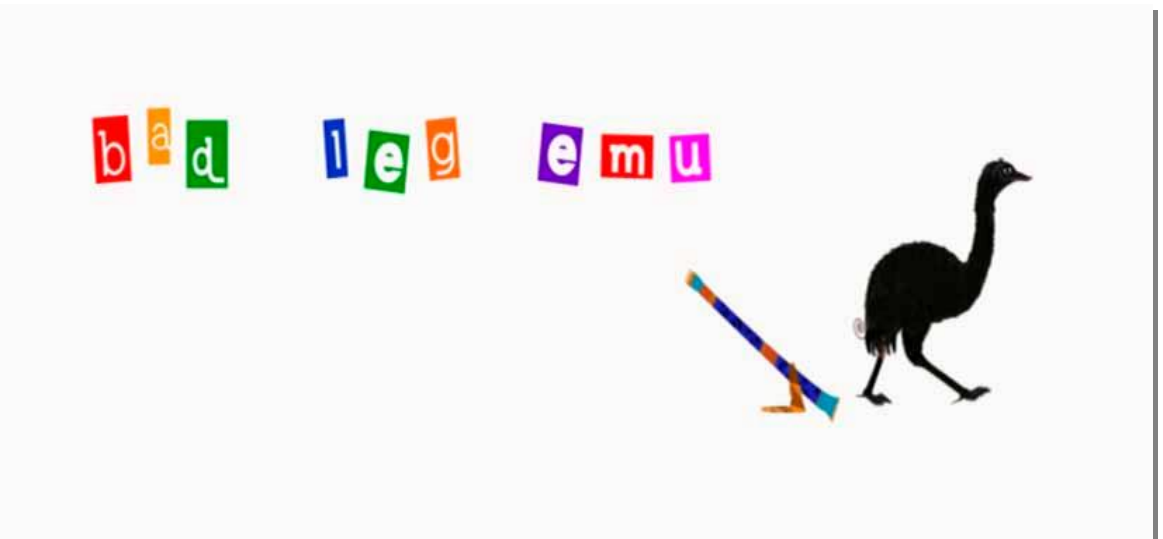
Produced at the College of Fine Arts in Sydney, this work tests the limits of visual style in documentary by merging MTV music video with broadcast journalism to raise and sometimes provoke questions such as:

Why do we attach ourselves so strongly to certain objects? Do we believe it will make us happy? What is our ‘brand’ as people and how do we define happiness?

‘what brand are you?’ is a moving portrait of today, whose value lies in the questions raised—prompting the viewer to reflect their significance on a personal level—and the meaning that can arise from the contemplation of their answers.



**Figure 1: A still image from the introductory title sequence.**



**Figure 2: A still image from the introductory title sequence.**

## *The journey*

This volume is a document of a journey, an attempt to understand, to reconnoiter the idea of happiness, now commandeered by the world of marketing, and a descriptive meditation of the creative process behind the making of *what brand <are you?>*.

In the first part of the work I look at the conceptual premises that formed the framework of *what brand <are you?>*. This portion follows the structure of the documentary itself, first entering into differing aspects of brands and moving on into happiness, eventually comparing and contrasting the two ideas. After that I discuss the process of making this project and finally I draw conclusions on what has been learned.

I hope that *what brand <are you?>* will add it's own insignificant part to the body of philosophical examination into the way that we as individuals assign meaning, and how our small choices are a part of a resonant feedback loop in larger society.

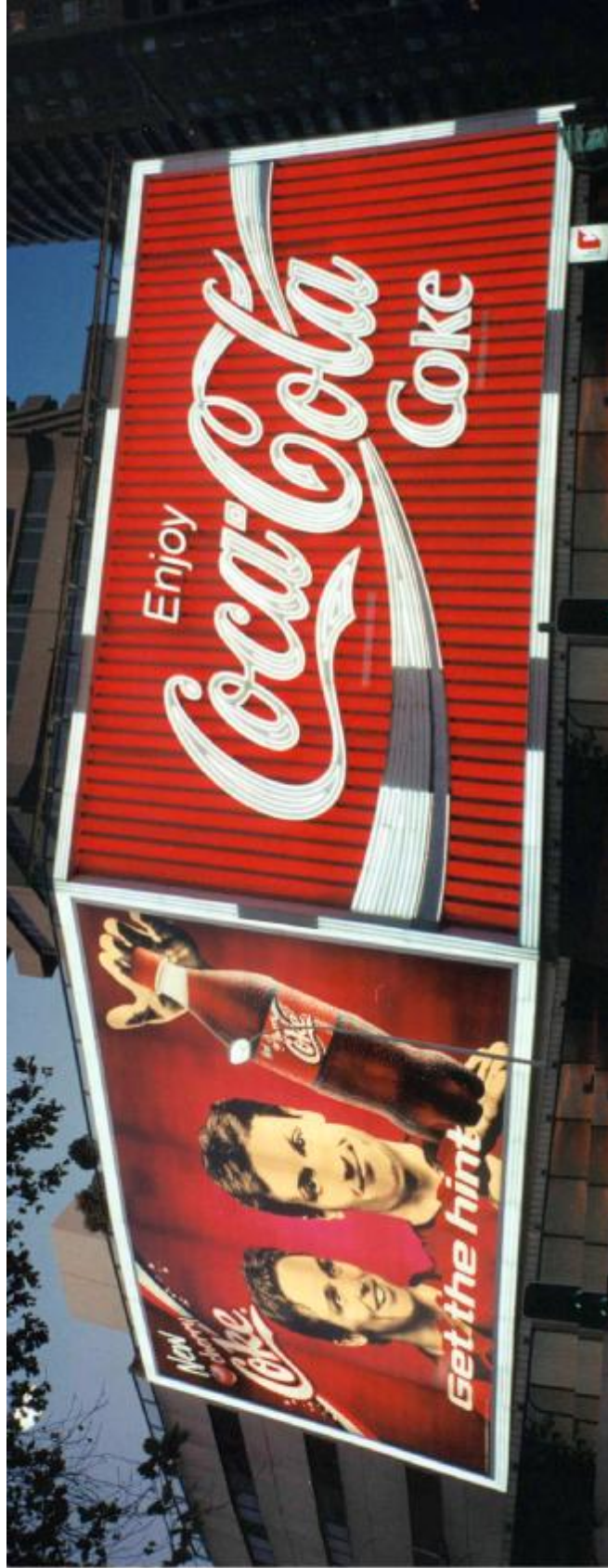


Figure 3: The famous Coca-Cola sign at Kings Cross.

‘Western society is without belief for the first time since the decline of active devotion in the official religion of the Roman Empire. Our situation is unprecedented. There is no example in the last two thousand years of any civilization surviving without belief for even fifty years. There is nothing in our traditions or our mythology to deal with it. Even in our animist archetypes there is no comfort to be found, because Western man has never been so divorced from all sense of himself as an integral part of the physical earth.’

- John Ralston Saul -<sup>2</sup>

‘But old clothes are beastly,’ continued the untiring whisper. ‘We always throw away old clothes. Ending is better than mending, ending is better than mending, ending is better...’

- Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* -<sup>3</sup>

## **2** CONCEPTUAL PREMISES

# Brand?

‘What really matters is what you like, not what you are like...’

- High Fidelity -<sup>4</sup>

‘Branding isn’t advertising it’s the new production.’

- Naomi Klein -<sup>5</sup>

## Starting Point

The impulse to focus on the *brand* for this project, as opposed to advertising or marketing, is because brands are the ubiquitous symbols behind which corporations operate. Globally, brands are the common language, the signs of ‘progress,’ and the *recipient of all the energy* that is put into marketing and advertising. In order to understand ourselves and especially, when we are most happy, we must understand the system in which we live, one in which brands receive more attention creatively and fiscally than many other considerations that one would think are much more important, such as, poverty, environmental, health, education etc...

The most widely recognized definition of a brand comes from the American Marketing Association:

A name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of these, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.<sup>6</sup>

While this fairly innocuous definition is an excellent starting point it does not by any means capture the entire meaning of a brand outside of the marketing or law community and once it is put into common use. Specifically, it does not account for the emotional aspect of a brand and the value of the experience that a particular brand offers which are arguably more important aspects of the brand than the ‘name, term, sign, symbol...’

## **What is a Brand?**

Historically, branding dates back to before Christ. Trademarks on pottery from early Mesopotamia date back to 3,000B.C. and a Sandal Maker from Syria began marking his Sandals with his name in 200B.C.<sup>7</sup> Up until very recent history (about the 1940's) it was predominantly used to distinguish product A from product B.<sup>8</sup> Even so, haven't we all seen old ads from the fifties and laughed at how silly they are, finding them quaint and funny: ('You'll wonder where the yellow went when you brush your teeth with Pepsodent').

Branding's steps from 1940's onward into psychological/anthropological territory took some time, however, by the 1980's corporations embraced the idea that they were selling brands not products.<sup>9</sup> Though brands began as a rather simple way of distinguishing one product from the other, today, they have evolved into the focus of billions of dollars, and the new science of branding.

## **Image and Emotion**

The latest studies in this field of how best to sell a brand, or anything for that matter, focus on human emotion. Titles such as, *Lovemarks*, *Emotional Branding*, *Passion Branding*, and *Emotion Marketing*, have tapped into human psyche like never before.<sup>10</sup> In *Lovemarks*, Kevin Roberts draws from the work of Neurologist Donald Calne, who says, 'The essential difference between emotion and reason is that emotion leads to action while reason leads to conclusions.'<sup>11</sup> Having taken the step into the emotional realm branding has merged seamlessly into our lives. Objects and what they represent are consistently there for us. Works such as, *Be Your own Brand*, and *The Personal Branding Phenomenon*, go beyond worries set out in books such as Naomi Klein's, *No Logo*, by not only taking over public space and permeating culture, but also penetrating the Western self.<sup>12</sup>

We are now asked to align our person with the symbols of culture and identity such as BMW's, Rolex's, Prada's and brand ourselves. Increasing numbers of people have taken this idea so seriously that they are naming their children after their favorite brands; some of the most popular names being, Bentley, Jaguar, Xerox, Chanel, Porsche, Timberland, Reebok, and Camry. Canon is the most popular name of all.<sup>13</sup>

One of the greatest examples of a brand that has captured the hearts and minds of western consumers is Nike. In an interview for *what brand <are you?>*, the Director of The Happiness Institute in Sydney, Dr. Sharp, pointed out that when you buy Nike shoes you are buying it's benefits, in this case,

'You don't just think of running shoes, you think of achieving things and success in the sporting arena. That's obviously what they've tried to create with a great line 'Just Do It'. So, they've obviously created an image much more than just a running shoe.'<sup>14</sup>

The Nike swoosh, and the name, 'Nike', are very important aspects of the brand, however it's the image, as Dr. Sharp pointed out, that catapults a brand into more than a mere object, but a symbol enrobed in mystery whose magic can deliver dreams and the unattainable. It is the image, or personality of a brand, (created by marketers, then relayed by advertisers,) which reaches out to the emotional sphere of the consumer's psyche. Are we buying because of pretty logos, catchy names and slogans, or because of the brand-image?

While once the definition of brand as 'name, term, sign, symbol...' may have been a suitable description with 'brand-image' as a tidy derivative, it now seems outdated. A definition proposed by Mark Green, Group Accounts Director at Saatchi & Saatchi feels more accurate. He describes a brand as, 'a combination of emotional and rational attributes associated with a product or service.'<sup>15</sup> This definition takes into account the deeply personal way in which brands have seamlessly merged into our lives and our emotional attachments to them.

**Figure 4: A still from the introductory title sequence.**



## **POPULAR LOVEMARKS**

**From Lovemarks.com**

### **AUSTRALIA**

I've never been in Australia before. But it is a dream to me. I know some people who live there and they don't want to live in other countries. The sea, the aborigines, the desert and the people contributes to you finding your own way in life. Magic place, alone in the sea but with an eye to the future. As the singers of Gang Gajang say: "Out in the patio, we sit. And the humidity we breathe. We watch the lightning crack on the cane fields, love and think, this is Australia."

Felipe, Portugal - 30 August 2004<sup>16</sup>

Desert, tropical waters, snow, forests, mountains, all types of sport, a fair go, open spaces and minds, a willingness to pitch in and a welcoming attitude. Come and see for yourself. A long way to come but worth every mile. Unique. Where else in the world would you find a country whose national song sings of a 'criminal'? You'll come a Waltzing Matilda with me.

Downunder forever.

Sue, Australia - 20 August 2004<sup>17</sup>

### **VEGEMITE**

I not only love vegemite and have it on toast every day - I also remember eating it with butter on dry weet-bix - YUMMY - with a cup of milk and milo to help wash it down.

Lisa, Australia - 6 January 2005<sup>18</sup>

I was surprised (pleasantly) to read that Kiwis grow up on Vegemite too! I really thought that only Aussies were "Happy Little Vegemites". It just goes to show that although our two nations can be great rivals they're also great friends with much in common!

Jenny, Australia - 21 November 2003<sup>19</sup>

### **NIKE**

Nike is not just a sports brand, Nike is a life-style. To me, Nike means personal achievement and self-improvement. I use Nike products because it helps me to run better, to improve every day I run. Nike understands what I need and what I want. That's why I love it.

Victor, Canada - 18 November 2004<sup>20</sup>

## **Lovemarks**

CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi, Kevin Roberts has determined the role of emotion in creating and maintaining a brand as so important, that he has coined a new term called 'Lovemarks', to describe the role of brands in the future. In a presentation given at Borders Westwood bookstore, Los Angeles, Mr. Roberts defined Lovemarks as 'super-evolved brands that make deep emotional connections with consumers. Passionate connections that go inside people's lives and make a difference.'<sup>21</sup>

In his book, *Lovemarks: The Future Beyond Brands*, Mr. Roberts points out that 'One way to think about what a Lovemark might be is to consider how a consumer would feel if you took the brand away.'<sup>22</sup> We all might recall Coca-Cola's experience with introducing a new formula for Coke not so long ago. People protested in such large mass and with so much energy that Coca-Cola was forced to keep the old formula, now Coca-Cola Classic. They loved their soft drink and weren't going to let anyone take it away. Coca-Cola Classic is truly a lovemark.

Testimonials found on <http://www.lovemarks.com> underline the strong emotional attachment as seen with Coca-Cola Classic, and serve to emphasize that a more accurate description of what a brand is could even include characteristics similar to those normally used to describe relationships between living beings (See p.13 for testimonials). In effect, one could say brands are bidding to be our long-term best friend, our caretakers, and our lovers. Timothy Brock, professor of psychology at Ohio State University, has labeled a relationship that takes place between a fabricated personality and a human, as 'parasocial'.<sup>23</sup> Harvard Business School Associate Professor Susan Fournier has 'identified a total of 15 types of consumer/brand relationships, from marriages of convenience and casual friends to courtships, flings and secret affairs.'<sup>24</sup> While it might seem harmless to feel attached to, and even have 'relationships' with a particular brand, the way in which this manifests in, especially children, is cause for concern.

## Redefining Happiness

In *Brandchild, Remarkable Insights Into the Minds of Today's Global Kids and Their Relationships with Brands*, Martin Lindstrom cites research from Marketing professor Dr. James McNeal at Texas A&M. He found that children from as young as eighteen-months old are able to recognize brands, between two and three they are drawing brands, and at five they are capable of influencing the purchase of their favorite brands.<sup>25</sup> The power of this study hit home for me during an interview with three-year old, Tyson Colette, for this research project. Although Tyson had never watched Spiderman, simply from absorbing his environment he was able to talk very fluently about what kind of guy Spiderman is. He had also recognized that his Dad drives a BMW and that's the kind of car he wants to drive when he gets bigger. What is astounding to me is that he didn't say big car or blue truck, he said BMW. That Tyson knows the names of brands and when he grows up may buy a BMW instead of—let's say—a Holden, is just the beginning. At three Tyson is already beginning to understand what a brand is, that it is far more than a 'name, term, design, symbol...' but in fact, the essence of a values system, which includes our lifestyle choices, how we measure our self-worth, our success, our popularity, and how we define happiness. I will return to this idea, however, first I would like to discuss the question: what is happiness, especially, in the context of the aforementioned systems of meaning.



**Figure 5: Tyson Colette shows Spiderman's superhuman capabilities.**

# Happiness?

‘One of the fundamental conditions of happiness is to know that everything one does has a meaning in eternity.’

-Titus Burckhardt -<sup>26</sup>

## Wallowing in Happiness

Grasping the idea of happiness is a mountainous task. When you just begin to think about happiness it feels a bit foolish and talking about a serious study of happiness has, in my experience, caused giggles and a feeling that people tend to associate you with a new age space-cake. That happiness is the latest fad, the latest feel good concept being marketed to consumers, does not help the matter. At the date of this writing, a brief browse on Amazon.com reveals that there are roughly 100 books published in 2005 alone, related to the topic of happiness. I discovered the epitome of the trivialization of the term, ‘happiness,’ when I found myself humming: if you’re happy and you know it clap your hands, and shiny happy people holding hands, and happiness is a warm gun, so don’t worry be happy, all of which don’t serve to further understanding and possibly confuse the matter more.

## What Exactly is Happiness?

Ancient thought considered one’s life as a whole when defining happiness. The Greek word for happiness (eudaimon) connotes ‘a more permanent condition of life or disposition of character.’<sup>27</sup> Since then ideas of happiness have been watered down with instant gratification, or the sort of volumes that provide three quick steps to pleasure. Defining happiness today is a very difficult task. Director of the Happiness Institute, Dr. Timothy J. Sharp describes happiness as an ‘umbrella term that covers a range of (positive) emotions.’ He also elucidates that, ‘happiness is not one thing, and it is a subjective experience.’<sup>28</sup>

In his book, *The Happiness Paradox*, Ziyad Marar describes happiness as being just that, a

paradox. We wish to be accepted by others, however, to achieve approval we must conform, as well as open ourselves up to the risk of being unaccepted; '*a modern sensibility both wants to break free and wants to belong*'.<sup>29</sup> The world database for happiness, compiled at Erasmus University in Rotterdam and a very ambitious attempt at bringing together studies completed about happiness world wide, describes happiness as, 'the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her own life-as-a-whole favorably. In other words: how much one likes the life one leads,' a definition that is much more similar to the one understood in early Greek philosophy.<sup>30</sup>

There are also any number of ways to describe happiness recorded by poets, philosophers, and writers.

Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.  
-Nathaniel Hawthorne<sup>31</sup>

Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.  
-Mahatma Gandhi<sup>32</sup>

Happiness is the interval between periods of unhappiness.  
-Don Marquis<sup>33</sup>

Given many factors such as differences in languages and attitudes over time, defining what happiness is will probably continue to be a difficult topic to agree on. Some ways researchers have found to form a more concrete idea of happiness is to study the traits of happy people, rate levels of happiness, and find exactly when we are most happy and why.

One study found that happy people display four traits: they have high levels of self-esteem; they feel they have control over their lives; they are optimistic and extroverted.<sup>34</sup> The key amongst those traits is self-esteem. That translates into liking yourself, and if you are able to do that it's likely that you will be more compassionate and forgiving to others. This in turn increases the chance that you will have a support network of friends who will encourage you and thus you will be more optimistic. This study is also enlightening in that having all of those traits in no way requires that you are rich and have a luxury lifestyle. In fact, a study on lotto winners concluded that, 'those whose incomes have increased over a

10-year period are not happier than those whose incomes have not increased.’<sup>35</sup> If winning the lottery doesn’t make you happier than what will?



**Figure 6: Chocolate makes her happy.**



**Figure 7: The Sydney Morning Herald Article, 'Brand Your Soul, It'll Fetch a Higher Price,' by Julia Baird, composited with a picture of a Jesus figure and Franco Marinelli.**

## Flow

Some of the most important research to date into understanding happiness has been completed by prominent psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. In his book *Flow, the psychology of optimal experience*, he has ‘tried to understand as exactly as possible how people felt when they most enjoyed themselves and why.’<sup>36</sup> His study not only delves into better understanding of happiness, it also, begins to clarify the original question posed by Socrates to Plato: ‘what is a life worth living?’<sup>37</sup> In order to determine this question for yourself you must form answers to: what do I believe in? Who would I like to be? And of course, what makes me happy? Approaching these questions, Csikszentmihalyi and a team of researchers have examined people’s experiences worldwide and developed the concept of flow. Flow is ‘the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.’<sup>38</sup> That could include activities like, exercising, painting, reading, doing a crossword, dancing, playing an instrument, yoga, meditation and so on. The most significant part of this research is that while we may engage in many activities that create a sense of flow, it is really the awareness of *meaning* that we perceive or attribute to these activities, that ties them all together and hopefully crafts the ‘life worth living,’ that Socrates discussed.<sup>39</sup> We know that, ‘A sense of meaning and purpose is the single attitude most strongly associated with life satisfaction.’<sup>40</sup>

Giving meaning to flow activities is as challenging a concept as understanding happiness, though unlike searching for happiness, meaning is something that you can actively pursue without defeating its nature. Deeper questioning into when people most feel happy is intrinsically a study into meaning. There is no question that our Western society values traits such as competitiveness, aggressiveness, and equates more worth to those who are rich or famous, while looking down on the poor. Through this, ‘a life worth living,’ or a life with value, with meaning, becomes one that should fit into the most valued profile, e.g.: a doctor with a beach-house, a sports car or two, and proper cumulus of items, because we expect this power, this money, will make us happy—or do we?



**Figure 8: Sale! Sale! Sale!**

## Happiness or is it?

“‘Everybody’s happy now.’  
‘Yes everybody’s happy now,’ echoed Lenina. They had heard the words repeated a  
hundred and fifty times every night for twelve years.”

- Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* -<sup>41</sup>

### Ubiquitous Brands

There is no space anymore that hasn’t been colonized by the presence of brands—billboards, buses, bathroom stalls, magazines, cultural events, living rooms, and most importantly, our thoughts. It is fair to say there is no escape from the message of brands. Even when we have a choice to read a book at home or watch TV (in other words, advertising with some content in between) the majority of people worldwide head for the remote control. The frightening part of it all is the figures for youth TV viewing. In Australia youth ‘spend 70 percent of passive leisure time watching TV.’<sup>42</sup> Children in the USA, Australia and Japan see about 20,000 to 40,000 TV commercials a year, and in America, by the age of eighteen they have absorbed 16,000 instances of murder through the tube.<sup>43</sup> It’s no wonder that there are some resultant effects such as children as young as three year-old Tyson Colette being able to recognize, or even favor a particular brand.

### Happiness Redefined

The constant bombardment and pressure to consume affects everyone. We are presented at every moment of the day with temptation, and navigating amongst this persuasion, sorting out our choices, choosing brands that suit who we want to be, the objects that make us unique, somehow different, becomes our meaningful pathway. We consume out of habit, just for consumptions sake, because that is what we in the West do. Even if we notice that choosing Mambo over Ripcurl doesn’t distinguish us as an individual with freedom of choice, when we look around for what would, the immediate answers we find are simply *different* products or brands that might just do the trick. Distinguishing meaning outside of

avenues of consumption is not an easy task. Our day to day activities and experiences feed into who we are, what we believe in, what kind of life we would like to live and our ideas about what makes us happy. Defining these things for ourselves though crucial, may even not occur to many of us as important—as is indicated in an annual survey of college freshmen at UCLA where they found that ‘the number of students who said it was a very important or essential life goal to “develop a meaningful philosophy of life” fell to an all-time low of 39 percent, while succeeding financially has increased to a 13-year high, at 74 percent.’<sup>44</sup> Behind the desire to ‘succeed’ financially, is the buried hope that we will be happier if...or, when something happens, when something changes. Happiness has become an idea that exists in the *future* and depends on us acquiring a new car, a new flatbed TV screen, or a new nose.<sup>45</sup> One psychologist quoted in Susan Linn’s *Consuming Kids*, says, ‘Ten years ago, when I asked kids how they saw their future, they talked about what kinds of professions they wanted to have, but now when I ask them those questions I find myself listening to a litany of things that they want to own! It’s like the substance of their lives has been replaced by the externals.’<sup>46</sup>

## **Affluenza**

This view of existence is proving to be harmful to us. Obesity is the number one health problem in rich countries. In Australia, ‘Nearly 60 percent of Australian adults are overweight, while experts believe close to 30 percent of children are overweight or obese.’<sup>47</sup> Depression medication alone ‘generates roughly \$17bn a year.’<sup>48</sup> The medication isn’t working very well because many people have eating disorders like anorexia or bulimia, or are rushing to the surgeon’s table. ‘One cosmetic surgeon comments that teens now treat cosmetic alterations as if they were designer jeans.’<sup>49</sup> Not only are we making ourselves ill we are polluting as well as depleting our environment. You can hardly pick up a newspaper in Australia without reading concerns about water shortage. We are all aware of global warming, deforestation, soil erosion, and that the race for the earth’s resources has begun. We are warned that the wars of the future will be over the scarce resources that are fast being used up by our careless consumption. I won’t even begin to discuss repercussions in periphery nations that are a direct result of our desire for more.



**Figure 9: A thought provoking study.**

### **Where Are We At?**

Previous discussions in this paper can be sourced readily anywhere. My question then is, can it be that people are genuinely mistaken about what makes them happiest, and confused between desires and needs? In the forum, 'Can Money Buy Happiness,' held at UTS in Sydney on 23 September 2004, Clive Hamilton pointed out a study by Newspoll which reported that '2/3 of Australians... said that they can't really afford to buy everything they need. And...the top 20 percent so the richest people in one of the richest countries in history, half of them said they can't afford to buy everything they really need.'<sup>50</sup> While this appears to answer my questions it does not answer *why* we are confused between desires and needs. Is frenzied consumption indeed the new religion that will now dominate the coming centuries perpetuated by advertising and coupled with government policies that encourage economic growth as well as the selfish values of the market? Are we addicted to beautiful things? Is branding so powerful? Has it so intertwined with our identity and ideas about what makes us happy that we are deceived? Are we so emotionally attached to our objects that we don't see any alternative ways of living? Do we feel trapped with no other

opportunities to improve our lives other than through items? Do we fail to see the irony that the current system depends on collective discontent, and a blind belief that we will be happier if we live like Hollywood stars?

These questions are the core of *what brand <are you?>*, as is the hope that people in the privileged West will awaken within this millennium. As we all know, ‘the greatest danger to consumer capitalism is the possibility that people in wealthy countries will decide that they have more or less everything they need.’<sup>51</sup> In the last chapter, ‘Results’, I will tackle suggestions for how best to express a decision that we ‘have more or less everything we need’ in the West, but first I would like to discuss the making of *what brand <are you?>*.



**Figure 10: Dr. Sharp points out that happiness is an idea that exists in the future. An example of that is the way we often think, I would be happier if...**



**Figure 11: Status.**



‘What capitalistic, materialistic myth have we enslaved ourselves to? Why do we think life is about achieving something or attaining a goal? Why do we think it is about getting somewhere or doing something? Why would we make movies about actions or event? Whose life is reducible to its events? Whose soul can be summed up by its actions? What we are is infinitely more interesting than what we do. Dare to make a film that shows that people are more interesting than the crazy events taking place around them. Show how what we do to ourselves emotionally is more interesting than anything anyone else does to us.’

- Ray Carney -<sup>52</sup>

# 3 PROCESS

# Inspiration

## The Bedrock

The concerns laid out in the previous chapters stem from the immense body of work related to this topic, and certainly, growing up in America has lent a distinct eye into the world of brands and branding. The calculated plan for how to create product redundancy and instill dissatisfaction into the consumer has been with America since the 1920's.<sup>53</sup> Undoubtedly, opposition to the values that they stand for has been around just as long. The first time I became aware of the vast power of corporations and brands was not through courses at University but through stories from friends and especially one story from Flint, Michigan, a town not too far from where I grew up. Michael Moore captured that story in *Roger and Me* and since then I've devoured the foundation of work that so many have provided to help others understand and determine their individual truths. I personally found stories and poetry from the Beat Poets, the Woodstock Generation, artists like Tori Amos, Leonard Cohen, and feminist Naomi Wolf, with her book, *The Beauty Myth*, an inspiration. *No Logo*, was for me as well as many others, however, a turning point. It led to a wealth of information, such as publications like, *The Nation*, and *Alternet.org*, *Fast Food Nation*, *The People's History of America*, and writings by Chomsky. I became exposed to documentaries like, *This is What Democracy Looks Like*, which shows what happened at the Seattle anti-WTO protests in 1999. When I later moved to Germany I found that I had access to viewpoints and documentaries that were blackballed in America. This affected me profoundly, and was nurtured further by channels such as ARTE, shows like *Tracks*, documentaries such as *September 11*, where 11 filmmakers from around the world interpret the events of that day, and books like *Small is Beautiful, a study of economics as if people mattered*.

Having lived in Europe a total of three years I had an advantageous point of comparison between the many differences in attitudes to brands and branding, advertising and

globalization that exist in America and Europe. I had a chance to view the way different communities grappled with change and followed the struggle that sometimes happened or laws that were laid to aid a community in retaining their individual identity. Among all of this I began to wonder, what about Australia? Given it's unique position geographically, it's population, its proximity to Asia, what do things look like there? Where is Australia at?

## Documentary Approach

### Voice

After quelling my initial fears that I had gotten on the wrong plane and was in fact in a large suburb of San Francisco, I moved on to cautiously tiptoe around the Sydney suburb, Randwick, (in case of wild animal sightings or wandering crocks) in search of food and



**Figure 13: \_sub: vegemite.**

blankets (I arrived on a cold August morning). I then moved on to more pressing details such as finding a job, and learning English all over again, (Sheila, mate, good on you, no worries, she'll be apples, how are you going, hey, and fair-dinkum – being at first incomprehensible).

Suffice it to say I knew very little about Australia before coming here apart from what I had read in travel books, and had heard about the people being very laid-back. I wanted to know what consumption looked like here. I wanted to get a sense of whether or not the location of Australia and its consumer population had afforded it some safety from the more harmful aspects of globalization that have affected America, such as urban sprawl, dying inner cities, and the disappearance of locally owned businesses.

As I knew so little about Australia it was a natural choice that I would not be present in the documentary visually, and I felt that anything that needed to be said that could not be clarified visually should be clarified through text. Given the nature of the topic, it felt clear to me that *what brand <are you?>* would be interview driven, though, as so many filmmakers today like Haskell Wexler, Hara Kazuo, Brian Hill, and Larry Clarke, I wanted to experiment as much as possible with documentary form.<sup>54</sup>

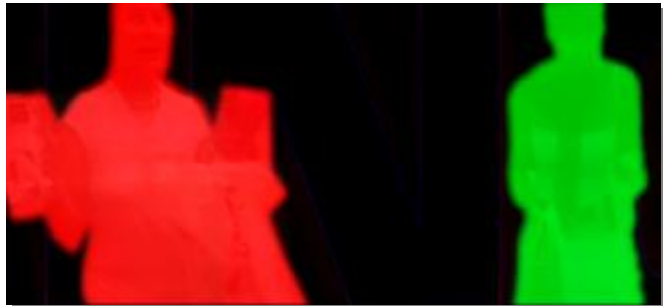


**Figure 14: *\_sub: coke.***

### **Aesthetics / *\_Sub***

On commencing this research project I sought to combine filmic genres and styles, as well as incorporate the digital language of motion graphics. On one hand I wanted to create a classic interview driven documentary that contrasted vox pop with professional interviews, yet on the other hand, I aimed to merge the visual aesthetics of broadcast journalism and MTV music videos. As in broadcast journalism, I felt that images supporting the story should be viewed simultaneously through the use of split screens or multiple screens. I also wanted the documentary to have a fast pace that referenced the hyper-reality created by advertising and bestowed upon brands. To achieve these goals I decided to produce *\_sub*

projects and use them as vignettes that play between the documentary segments, (see Figures 13-16). In producing these segments I borrowed from the history of poetic documentary employing montage and woven images, which, incorporate rhythm as part of their voice. The \_sub works as integrated in *what brand <are you?>* are similar to the European channel, ARTE's show, 'Tracks', an intelligent cultural show that breaks up informative segments with music videos, thus adding an extra kick to the program.<sup>55</sup> The \_sub projects as they stand-alone are influenced by electronic music culture and are more comparable to the unnerving or mesmerizing repetitious loops in Arthouse films. They are not like *Modell 5*, by the group 'Granular Synthesis', yet they do similarly aspire to tell a human story through machination of experience.<sup>56</sup> They *are* in the comical spirit of Johan Söderberg's 'Read My Lips', a series of film clips popularized on the Internet, where political celebrities such as George Bush or Saddam Hussein are lip-synced to everyone's favorite love songs.<sup>57</sup>



**Figure 15: \_sub: need.**

The \_sub works were chosen from a group of key brands that continued to reoccur during the interviews for *what brand are <you?>*. What I have essentially done is interview these key brands, Nike, Coke, and Vegemite. Their interviews are represented through motion and their language is symbolic. Each brand has a different personality as shown through their assigned music and actions.

## **Reasoning**

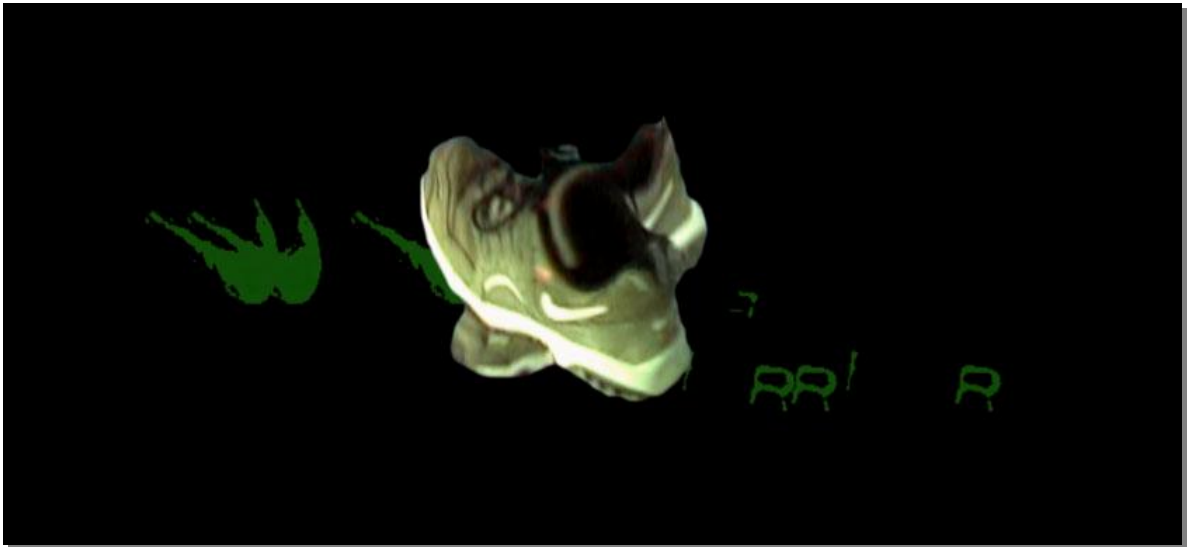
Through the course of my study the question arose as to whether or not the interviews with the brands are documentary content. It calls me to think of a meeting I went to on 14 April 2005 at Ozdox, (a meeting place for those interested in documentary films), where experimental artist and filmmaker Janet Merewether played an excerpt of her latest documentary: *Jabe Babe: A Heightened Life*.<sup>58</sup> Her film takes a look at the life of Jabe, a

woman with Marfan disease who for much of her professional life worked as a dominatrix. Her documentary incorporates highly produced fictional setting into the story of Jabe's life. It struck me while viewing these elements, that without them, her documentary would not feel as honest. *Jabe Babe* acknowledges the fictional aspect of documentary and in a way, concedes that our realities are based on fiction. I'm not just talking about oft-biased media, marketing messages, or an entire history that is written by certain few men—I am talking about the fantasy that is woven into the fabric of our thought. The technique employed in Janet Merewether's film is fundamental to an understanding of Jabe's life, especially given her chosen profession. Similarly, producing a documentary about the emotional role brands play in people's lives and how that affects our views of when we are happy, would be less honest if it didn't include an element of fantasy. The interviews with the brands acknowledge the superficiality of marketing, as well as the ridiculous nature of these items, which have somehow attained an inflated meaning and even worship in our society.

Another film that provided inspiration as well as justification for producing the \_sub projects in between the documentary segments was, *Surplus: Terrorized into being Consumers*. Some people have described this film as more a music video than a documentary. Others complained that it had no content. However, in this case, the point of the documentary wasn't to inform us but to evoke feeling, passion, and to provoke us. The tools they used very effectively to do so, were beat driven music coupled with beautiful images. Each and every element of this documentary film from Erik Gandini was synchronized to an exquisite soundtrack composed by Johan Söderberg. Every word, every move was in sync. Through its rhythm *Surplus* coerces emotion to the surface, and it is in this state that it forces viewers to question the current capitalist system and its emphasis on consumption. For its timely and much needed message, as well as visual style, it won the Silver Wolf at Amsterdam's IDFA in 2003.<sup>59</sup>

These films helped me to rationalize the product interviews based on several grounds. First, they may provide a place for the viewer to absorb the verbal content in the previous sections. They also offer the viewer the opportunity to ponder their own interaction in the world of brands, and ask her/himself how these objects may or may not impact their personal life. Further, they are, as mentioned earlier, a play on the language used for

marketing these very products to us. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, they provide comic relief.



**Figure 16: *\_sub: nike*.**

As one of the icons of Australia, Vegemite, in this project, fell into the role of foreshadowing the larger forces of Nike and Coke. It's no surprise that these two icons continued to reoccur throughout the interviews I held with people when you consider 'Coke is the most widely recognized word in the English language after "OK"', and was even the cause of unexpected events as well as confusion in a simple African tribe in the now infamous movie, *The God's Must be Crazy*.<sup>60</sup> Nike is the largest shoe company in the world, raking in a cool 13.7 billion to round up the 2005 fiscal year.<sup>61</sup> In *\_sub: nike*, Nike moves to a visual backdrop of floating, green-colored, Nike swooshes, (Fig. 16). The techno music matches the rhythm of the Just Do It-generation that Douglas Rushkoff, writer and producer behind Frontline's 'The Merchant's of Cool,' describes as, 'a reductive and dangerous substitute for a philosophy of life,' where *just do it* means doing without thinking, in other words buy and don't think to much about it.<sup>62</sup> In Coke's interview I try to expose the emptiness of this 'just do it' society and rip open the product itself to discover that nothing is there, (Fig. 14). The last sub project, *\_sub: need*, although not a blue-room element, was created with a similar technique and is used in the same fashion as the

interviews with Vegemite, Nike, and Coke (see Fig. 15). In this instance we the people are seen in a repetitious loop, moving along an invisible conveyer belt as we display our products. We are automatons that are pulled on a string, manufactured, and serving our function as consumers, as our most inner thoughts are bared for all viewers. Thoughts like, 'but I need it,' 'I want it,' 'how can I get it', express the way that capitalism shapes our minds and renders us shallow and useless beings, beyond our function of supporting the markets.

### **Blue Room Technique**

Initial experiments I made were of brands spinning on a turntable against black. I experimented with different shutter speeds, f-stops, and lighting. Finally, I decided that for increased versatility later, I would shoot the brand interviews in the blue room. Though I had done some research into how to approach a shoot technically, at the initial shoot I found myself unprepared for equipment failure and a problematic production facility. Of my first attempt nothing was usable, however, it did provide me with content that I could experiment with in-order to learn the post-production side of blue-room content. Largely, based on that knowledge, the next two shoots went smoothly and were immensely aided by the availability of the Lowell lighting kit.



**Figure 17: Fun in the blue-room.**

## Compositing/Visual Style

John Colette, my supervisor, suggested that I consider adding multiple screens to the documentary to provide more space for reflection. After some initial worries I decided that working with *two* screens would be the best choice for what I wanted to achieve. First of all, it would force me to learn the compositing software, After Effects, as you cannot customize your screen sizes in the Final Cut Pro, the editing program that was available to me. Since that decision I have come to immensely enjoy and respect After Effects for its depth. What really peaked my interest as far as creating a documentary across two screens was the opportunity to bring documentary into the aesthetic still largely reserved for fiction or music video pieces. I had never seen a documentary that used much of the things you see on the news or one that incorporated motion graphics. I wondered why documentaries don't use split screen images to their advantage more often, or weave images together, or use type creatively to convey a message? Of course, much of that is certainly a budgeting issue. It is expensive to pay post-production houses for special effects that aren't necessary. However, as post-production technology like After Effects, Final Cut Pro, or even Flash, become more ubiquitous, accessible, and user friendly, it is quite possible that the future of documentary will move towards a style that weaves images together, that moves much faster, and depends more on layered image. Visual language will build on what we know now, becoming increasingly synergistic, incorporating a mixed media feel, with ideas, and images that spill into each other, crossing, interchanging and merging. Documentary will feasibly become increasingly hybrid, mixing genres and styles in new ways. Working in a two-screen format gave me the freedom to experiment with these notions and begin to learn the skills to be able to find what exactly it is I like stylistically.

Further, it provided the opportunity to supplement the interview content with images that could either add meaning to the script or simply add texture aesthetically. Using two screens allowed me to create a visual narrative where I could emphasis or contrast subjects without leaving a judgmental overtone.



**Figure 18: Juxtaposing images.**

**For Instance:**

Throughout the documentary there is a visual narrative or commentary related to advertising such as news cut-outs or graphic elements like the world, (in the section ‘Happiness or is it?’) which has a bad infection that causes McDonalds, Microsoft, and Coke to burst out of her skin like chickenpox, (Fig. 18). Another obvious example of visual commentary is when Mark Green suggests, ‘Brands and lovemarks and all this sort of business, can make choice easier. They can make the actual purchase decision easier by



**Figure 19: What sums you up?**

highlighting the products point of difference and why it’s relative for their lives.’<sup>63</sup> This comment is juxtaposed with footage of McDonalds, (see Fig. 18). The message there is blatant: but what kind of choice to do we have? The second screen also provided an excellent canvas for text messages, that I employed in a similar typeface, big, bold, (often) red, to that used in Cate Shortland’s short film, *Joy*, (see fig. 19).

# Person to Person Interviews

## The Artform

What a difficult task! What a cumbersome dilemma! The interviews both tortured and inspired me. For the first time I became aware of the real power a documentary filmmaker could have to manipulate. It would be so easy to ask questions you know will equate exactly the response you want to hear, without bothering with the whole business of trying to lead interviewee to say it on their own with a fair question. There is an immense sense of responsibility for the people you interview, from the first moment of the original question to the last moments in which you decide where and how you will place what it is that this person said. I tried my best to create diversity in this project by representing as many voices as I could, and I tried to honor every interviewee who took the time to share their wisdom for the realization of *what brand <are you?>*.

## In the Streets

Talking to people in the streets was my first venture in learning the art of the interview. I also needed this platform to help clarify for myself the exact direction that *what brand <are you?>* should head.

After I learned interviews simply do not happen in the city (aside from the fact that most people don't have a moment to stop and talk, I was kicked out of Pitt Street's Pedestrian Zone twice, as well as several franchises), I concentrated on the beach areas and found that people were willing to open up to a complete stranger in amazing ways. The first questions I asked people were very philosophical and focused on Australia. I needed to gain an understanding of what people here were thinking about. I asked them about their hopes for the future and for Australia, what they would like to change if they could, and what they would like to stay the same here. I asked them what kinds of things they like to do, and read

and watch, and of course, what makes them happy. I burned tape after tape just chatting about these topics and similar ones. Through these interviews my very first question (how do brands affect us?) evolved into how do brands affect our view of when we are most happy? This experience was more enlightening than any class I've ever attended. It's because of the numerous people who were so generous with their time and who were willing to share their thoughts that I gained confidence and began to understand better how get people to relax in front of a camera and to lead them through an interview.

### **Nick Bleasel – Artist**

Being a true gentleman, Nick Bleasel offered to drive to the location as well as aid in carrying the hefty equipment on the day of our interview. Besides being an artist, he is an ex advertising man and a winner of the Cannes Advertising Festival silver lion.<sup>64</sup> Having made a conscious decision to leave advertising and pursue his art, I would say that Nick could be called a downshifter. I felt he could offer a unique perspective into brands given this background.

Nick was one of the first interviews I completed in a controlled setting. We filmed at Legge Gallery in Redfern, where his work was showing. Surrounded by Nick's artwork was inspiring. Perhaps among the most simple yet poignant of all of his work for me was the poster 'YOU ARE STILL ALIVE'. In 2002 this work was displayed in Sydney's CBD as part of the 'Art and About' festival.<sup>65</sup> It is a concentrate of our daily struggle. You are alive is mundane statement, however, you are *still* alive is a call to action. It is a revolution in a sentence. It is a dream waiting to be attempted. It means anything is possible: did you know, you are still alive? It dares you to understand this and make it your own. Nick is an excellent



**Figure 20: Nick Bleasel.**

example of an artist whose work challenges the viewers to think about the society in which he or she lives. He pokes fun at everyone and because he uses humor his work has a broad appeal. Everyone likes to laugh. In his own way Nick is making a difference in people's lives.

Of all the points he brought up in his interview the one I felt to be the most powerful and chose to lead into the interview with Coca-Cola was his statement that, 'A lot of the negative aspects about advertising and the marketing world I think are more appropriate as criticism of capitalism. If you banned advertising you would still have capitalism you would still have companies doing things that are ultimately bad for the individual.'<sup>66</sup> He goes right to the heart of many of the ills in society, not only today but also throughout history. Those who are in power eventually abuse their power. Is there a system that would work? Could we find that system? His statement brings many interesting questions to mind and that is what really needs to be done isn't it? Let's keep asking questions until we find the right ones.

### **Franco Marinelli – Commercials Director**

The colors were vibrant, the images flowed, one into the other. It was elegant, beautiful. Ok, it was a commercial, but it was a darn good commercial. Later when I visited Mr. Franco Marinelli's website (<http://www.visionarypictures.com>) I discovered he was the one who had made that commercial which had lingered in my mind. He also directed one for a brand called, 'Oxygen', that captivated my imagination so much I felt a compulsion to go out and buy whatever it was that they were selling. (What were they selling? It didn't matter, the people were young, sexy and cool.)



**Figure 21: Franco Marinelli.**

How does a director who specializes in commercials view brands and branding? How has the approach to branding changed over years? How do brands relate to people's lives? What does he consider when trying to communicate a certain brands message to people? These were some of the questions I was wondering. Reflective of much of the research I had done one of the first things that Mr. Marinelli mentioned in the interview was the role of emotion in making commercials. He tied that back to efforts made by the church during the renaissance where 'they employed artists to sell their images of heaven or God,' and explained that essentially corporations are doing the same thing.<sup>67</sup> Having originally begun as a painter that was probably an obvious link for Mr. Marinelli, however, at the time it was something I hadn't given much thought to. Church's were intentionally designed to instill fear into the hearts of their patrons. The symbolic imagery throughout the church's history is powerful. Today images of the cross, of Jesus bleeding on the crucifix, the fluffy white clouds of heaven and fiery gates of hell are symbols that endure. Corporations have used art forms and symbols in a similar fashion, though to urge people to buy products. Perhaps thousands of years from now the symbols with us today like the McDonalds M, Nike's swoosh, CK, Tommy's Colors, Marilyn Monroe's glam, will continue to stir desire. It is equally possible that this energy in the future will be channeled for very positive outcomes

and that many corporations will become the driving force behind preserving the environment, and other such causes. Mr. Marinelli explained that corporations are using the fundamentals discussed in Jungian philosophy. They are employing archetypes, and playing on emotion to sell a brand.

### **Dr. Sharp – Director of The Happiness Institute**

As the role of emotion kept coming up in research and in interviews I wondered what Dr. Sharp might have to say about the reverse. How do objects and brands play a role in our emotional states such as happiness?

Dr. Sharp pointed out that people do tend to think of happiness as something that is in the future that depends on getting the car, the house, the new something or other. Part of the reason for that is that we are immersed in an environment that reinforces that idea. It's hard to escape the desire for more. It's hard to find when you most feel happy in such a tempting atmosphere, where Dr.

Sharp pointed out that marketers are 'selling happiness in a misleading way.'<sup>68</sup>

The Happiness Institute is a result of a growing restlessness in which people are not finding



**Figure 22: Dr. Timothy J. Sharp.**

answers they seek from consumerist capitalism, religions, or the self-help aisles and need an extra boost. The Happiness Institute provides that with mental fitness. As Dr. Sharp said, in his seminars he asks people whether or not they think that they would be fitter if they went for a run everyday. Most people agreed that if you train your body every day you'll be fitter. Then he asked them, if you train your mind for twenty minutes everyday do

you think it would be fitter?<sup>69</sup> Of course we've all probably heard that one before but it does make a lot of sense. Use it or lose it, as they say.

We know that 'Entropy is the most normal state of consciousness—a condition that is neither useful nor enjoyable.'<sup>70</sup> In his seminars Dr. Sharp lays down very specific target areas for people to train their mind, and combat entropy.

He emphasizes an optimism that is realistic and in our interview he said 'the good thing is that optimism can be taught. If you're not naturally good at it you can learn to think more optimistically.'<sup>71</sup> He said that Happy people have a clear sense of their personal goals in life and at The Happiness Institute they help people define that. They also help people with communication strategies aimed at improving the quality of their relationships as healthy relationships contribute to happiness. He talked about teaching people time management and priority management to help them gain a sense of control over their lives. Very often we may not even be aware of what makes us happiest and for this he encourages an exercise that involves monitoring your mood to find out when you are most happy. From research into this type of monitoring scientists have learned that happy people engage in more activities that create a sense of flow. Taking part in these types of activities is just another strategy to create happiness. Each of these strategies to train the mind are essentially differing meditations, which goes back into roots of eastern philosophy where meditation is a daily practice inseparable from life.<sup>72</sup>

Dr. Sharp finally pointed out that from studies we know that 'those things that do achieve happiness are all in a sense intrapersonal, or interpersonal factors, they're not external factors like your clothes your car.'<sup>73</sup> Before we run out into the world determined to conquer our chosen goal we need to reflect. Is that really a worthy goal? Does this goal really encompass the type of person that I want to be? In our fast paced world these are things that we don't necessarily learn to take time for and a place like the Happiness Institute just might help people learn to do this, or encourage others to keep it up.

Although one might argue that The Happiness Institute is just another business venture exploiting the people's growing interest in metaphysical questions, I would point out that it's a shame these important questions are not being asked in schools and only in

specialized environments. It seems to me that there ought to be some time devoted in high school not only to asking what kind of job do you want, but also to philosophy, such as metaphysics. The history we have behind us of man's struggle to understand this life could be the crucial peg in the wall that kick starts individual journey's much sooner and with more honesty than without this type of study.

## **Sherlock**

Following the interview with Dr. Sharp I interviewed Sherlock. At the time of the interview Sherlock was living at Circular Quay. His bed was in a corner on the pavement but as he pointed out his front yard has one of the best views in the city, with the Opera house to his right and the Harbor Bridge to his left. This is just a glimpse of the humor Sherlock displays whenever you talk with him.

I met Sherlock one day as I was strolling by his home and saw the hand-painted sign on his desk that read: Peace and Love. I was drawn by curiosity guessing that it must be some sort of information booth for the environmental and or peace



**Figure 23: 'Sherlock of the Quay'.**

movement. I found out that this little corner was Sherlock's home and a meeting place for his numerous friends. Sherlock is a spiritual guide, a warm heart and a friend always willing to listen.

There were many parallels between what Sherlock and Dr. Sharp said; each have similar wisdom but use different words to express it with. When I asked Sherlock about whether or not people's obsession with money and things bothered him being in his situation he basically said that he tries to stay positive, be patient, and has learned to be content with the situation he's in. My questions about materialism or brands registered with him insofar as he associated them with greed, and that in turn led to war. He thinks in global terms. When

I asked him about happiness he talked about how he wished that the fighting in the world would stop, and said,

One of the things that would make me the happiest in the world would be to be shutting down arms and ammunition factories and building ice cream factories. I think kids need more ice cream out there. Let's face it, if you look at a kid and say would you want this hand grenade or would you rather this ice cream—that's pretty simple isn't it?<sup>74</sup>

More than anyone Sherlock has taught me a lesson. One day after stopping by Sherlock's place to have a chat I wrote the following in my project journal:

While I was chatting with Sherlock, a man who was there clutching a cane gave me some of his food. He had an entire bag full of muesli bars, sort of like breakfast bars. The one he gave me was dated for a month before, Feb. 2004. I assume his whole bag was full of these stale bars. He was bone thin, and when he talked I couldn't understand a word he said. He had nothing, yet he shared what he had with me. This is amazing, it's striking. When he gave it to me I wanted to say no – gosh, keep your food. But I took it and felt guilty, thinking it would be rude if I refused.

And it occurred to me it's always the ones who have no other shirt who will give you the shirt off their backs if you are in need, isn't it? How funny that it's those who have everything materially, that we hold up as the Gods of our society, while the ones who have nothing are simply, lazy. They want to be on the streets, they brought this condition onto themselves, they can always do something to get out of their situation, they are the scum, the losers of society.

Sherlock said that 'the most important is to do what I can, to bring a little more joy to the world.'<sup>75</sup> If we all had this simple goal the world would look quite different.

**Paul Moulds – Director of Oasis Youth Support Network  
and Josh Peachy – Former Homeless Youth**

The interview with Mr. Moulds came through deliberation into how organizations that help people might operate. How do those on the front lines, who as part of their job help others that have had very difficult life experiences see the world? What would a person who works with homeless children every day think of the Western world's relationship to things?

A few phone calls led me to the Director of Oasis Youth Support Network, Paul Moulds. Oasis helps homeless kids in various ways. They have an entire school system where disadvantaged youth can finish secondary school with others who have similar pasts as them. They have various kinds of art programs from traditional arts to digital arts. They have an outdoor adventure program, a radio program, a gardens team, and courses where you can learn technical skills such as computer programming, graphic design, and so on.



**Figure 24: Paul Moulds.**

Mr. Moulds emphasized the gap in wealth that our current consumerist society creates. As a result of that large proportions of the population are living in poverty and many of these people are kids. I found that there are 99,900 houseless people in Australia, of those houseless people, 36 percent are young people between the ages of twelve and twenty-four

years old.<sup>76</sup> Eighty percent of the homeless youth being cared for by the Salvation Army come from broken families and 50 percent of them have suffered physical or sexual abuse.<sup>77</sup> His viewpoint was crucial to the documentary. As he pointed out, the kids who have nothing are still ‘choosy about what they’ll put on their back. Because there’s this creation in the community to be accepted to be cool you have to wear the right clothing have the right brand name on you.’<sup>78</sup> These kids, who often come from broken homes, don’t have the opportunities that most of us in the West do. So, every twinge or wish that the rest of us have (I wish I could get a digital camera, a car, etc...) they have it worse, and as Mr. Moulds said, that creates anger as well as bitterness. They feel shut out of the community and sometimes that leads to violence, crime, drug abuse or worse.<sup>79</sup>

After the interview with Paul Moulds I began volunteering for The Oasis Youth Support Network’s digital film and video department. The video department works in close



**Figure 25: Josh Peachey.**

partnership with corporate sponsors such as Foxtel, for the creation and realization of programs and program content. Within this partnership I have assisted the video team with several tasks, including teaching media technology software like Photoshop, shooting footage, helping to set-up lighting for green screen shots, composited the footage, and color correction for their public service announcements.

Oasis has been a tremendous learning experience. Coming into contact with others who have had so little chance in life by comparison to most in the West changes your view. If everyone had the chance to hear the stories that run through the halls at Oasis we all might be a bit more compassionate towards others.

## Mark Green – Group Accounts Director at Saatchi and Saatchi

It took over a month to speak to someone at Saatchi & Saatchi. After becoming best friends with the guys manning the phones I was able to get an email, which led to another email



**Figure 26: Mark Green.**

contact, and that was Mark Green. I contacted Saatchi & Saatchi because I wanted to talk with someone about Lovemarks. As Kevin Roberts, the CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi had written the book, *Lovemarks*, I assumed that the worldwide staff

would operate under this philosophy of branding. I hoped to gain insight into that.

I asked Mark Green what a Lovemark was and how that differentiated from a brand. He explained that the Lovemarks of today not only point out why their product is better, they also tap into people's 'emotional needs.'<sup>80</sup> Doing that successfully is what will differentiate one brand from another and bring the status of certain brands to a Lovemarks. Lovemarks are the brands that people Love.

Discussing lovemarks was very enlightening in that this philosophy recognizes that the brands which have endured, the well-recognized brands (thus lovemarks), *are indeed loved*. Thus, it follows that the power of these particular brands (as well as all brands) is really in the hands of consumers. Consumers can divorce brands that are doing harmful things. Consumers can end their love affair with these objects. So, the power is really with us.

## Juan Mann – Free Hugs Advocate



**Figure 27: Juan Mann.**

I met Juan on my way home from work. Pitt Street was empty, except for a girl and Juan holding his sign that read, 'Free

Hugs'. I stopped and watched as the girl decided whether or not to trust Juan. In the end she didn't, and neither did I, but I asked him if I could take a photo of him. We started talking, one thing led to another, and before you know it, two strangers were hugging in the middle of Pitt Street, and you know what? It felt really good.

That experience led to an interview with Juan. I wanted to share what he was doing in the film and show how easy it is to do something positive. Juan's free hugs efforts were inspired by his trip to the UK, where he became extremely homesick for Australia, and upon return wanted to hug as many people as he could. Of all the causes you might choose in life, this is just one example, and I've seen the difference it makes. People were giggling, smiling, laughing and talking about some guy giving free hugs.

Free Hugs?

What's that about?

Is he with a religion?

Is he with a company?

Oh, he's just doing it for the film!

No, he does this every week, twice a week, I explained as I filmed.

One lady commented that 'he's cute, he smells good, and the hug made her very happy.'<sup>81</sup>

Whatever Juan's motives are for doing it, the end result is a bunch of smiles and that can't be a bad thing. Juan's actions, similar to Sherlock's art, Nick's posters and Mr. Moulds efforts at Oasis have an encouraging impact. I hope that these stories will inspire others to follow their own path and use it in a positive way, even if it seems a little off the main highway.

### **Clive Hamilton – Author, Executive Director of The Australia Institute**

I first read about Dr. Clive Hamilton in a Sydney Morning Herald Article. I was so inspired I went out the next day and bought his book, *Growth Fetish*, and have



**Figure 28: Clive Hamilton.**

followed his research at the Australia Institute since. In *Growth Fetish* he talks about implications of a politics based on growth. He proposes an alternative to capitalism and economic growth fetishism through ‘political downshifting’ and a politics that is based on well-being.<sup>82</sup> (I will touch more on this in the last section of this thesis.)

Dr. Hamilton’s research is at the forefront of those working for change in Australia and I was very excited to find that he was speaking at a Forum Hosted by The UTS Chaplaincy on the subject, ‘Can Money Buy Happiness.’ I contacted him as well as the forum and gained permission to film. I had also arranged to interview Dr. Hamilton before the forum however, at the last minute his schedule didn’t permit it. Of the list of questions that I had prepared for the interview I was able to ask him one. What do you personally hope for the future? Part of his answer to that became the last message in the video:

In *Growth Fetish* I talk about a post-growth society in which we can imagine people bringing some balance back into their lives. I’m not suggesting people should abandon their material possession and go out and live in humpies by any means. Its not money and material possessions that are the problem, it’s our attachment to them; our obsessive attachment to them. So I argue that we should focus on the things that really do matter—better relationships, pursuing the things we find fulfilling, but above all and this is what all of the studies show, only reinforcing folk wisdom and that is to lead a worthwhile and fulfilling life there’s one thing that dominates all other factors, and that is a sense of meaning and purpose. A sense of meaning and purpose in life, we know from all the studies, as well as intuitively, the thing that allows people to lie on their deathbeds and think it was worthwhile.<sup>83</sup>

### **Tyson Colette – Three Years Old**

I knew immediately I was dealing with a highly intelligent three-year old when he said my name and asked me to help him lift a Miller Tripod Case. ‘Can you help me Marlo,’ he asked? His question was direct and clear, but even more laudable was that he succeeded

where most adults fail—he remembered my name *and* he said my name correctly. Marlo, not Milo, (an error indigenous to Australia) not Marla, and not Mario.



**Figure 29: Tyson Colette.**

The interview with Tyson came about through a conversation with my Supervisor, John Colette. He was explaining how his friend, Wayne, has a BMW, and whenever his son, Tyson sees BMW's

he calls them Wayne-cars, (pronounced: wankars). He also talked about how Tyson was very aware of brands and we agreed that hearing a child's perspective in *what brand <are you?>* would help to create further understanding into the impact of brands on people's lives. For me, the chat with Tyson provided a thread to the project that asks the most important questions of all. What are we teaching our kids? What kind of world will we leave for them? What will be our legacy, our message for them?

I felt somewhat awkward going into this interview because I wasn't sure how to prepare. Fortunately, John was there to help. We asked Tyson about what things he likes to do and to watch. At some point he became excited and started talking about Spiderman, what Spiderman does, which of his friends have Spiderman, and so on. John made a point to explain that Tyson had never actually seen the Spiderman film. Later on in the interview I asked Tyson what kind of car he wanted to drive when he grew up and he asked his dad, 'what kind of car do you have daddy?'

To which John replied, 'I don't know, what kind is it?'

That's when Tyson said, 'it's a BMW one. I want to get a BMW for myself to drive, when I'm bigger.'

'Why,' I asked?

'Because I need to,' he replied.<sup>84</sup>

I couldn't believe what I'd heard. It's still amazing to me. Children are sponges at that age and even if you are very strict as far as TV, or fast food, or giving them everything they want, they will still absorb the predominant messages that are out there. Today that translates into things. When you have more things you are a better person. Certain things with special badges (like the BMW one) are better than other things. At three Tyson is learning to become fluent in where we attach importance and significance.

## Technical/Equipment

### Production

This project was shot almost entirely on the Sony PD150 with additional footage from the PD100 or TRV22, using the Sennheiser 816 shotgun or the Sennheiser K2-U mini-shotgun microphone. I lit with the Dedo and Lowell kits. I filmed the brand interviews in the blue room at the College of Fine Arts (COFA), UNSW. Photos were largely gathered with my Canon Prima Zoom 85N and a few with the Kodak DX4330 digital still camera. Except for my own analogue still camera all equipment was provided by COFA.



**Figure 30: My workstation.**

Aside from becoming comfortable enough with the equipment in order to take it into a professional interview setting, a large portion of the production side included tracking down candidates for interviews, arranging as well as shooting the interview itself, and logging all footage recorded. Without my detailed log, post-production would have been a chaotic mess. Various ways to organize the project were suggested, however I found that a simple brainstorm chart, and the log itself proved to be the most crucial tools in pulling everything together.

## Post-Production

All post-production was completed on my 12-inch PowerBook G4 with an extra monitor and cut together using After Effects 6.0, Final Cut Pro 4, Photoshop CS, Flash MX, Illustrator 10, (a bit of) Pro Tools, and the DVD's were authored using DVD Studio Pro 3. The immense amount of data required that I split the project across two hard drives. I used over 640GB of space (half for backup). This isn't counting data I had to manage aside from this project (which went onto additional drives). Data management was a great challenge for me. It required strict organization. Without special programs to aid in the copying of data or a set-up such as a raid drive—ensuring that everything was regularly backed up consumed a great deal time.

160 bpm = 1 ~~beat~~ every 0.375 sec  
25 f/sec = 1 frame every 0.04 sec  
30 → 0.03

$$0.04 x = 0.375$$
$$x = \frac{0.375}{0.04} = 9.375 \text{ frames}$$

every  
uses a  
beat

7.5 frames in 1 beat  
←

**Figure 31: Here I figured out how to time the image to the beat in \_sub: vegemite.**

Post-production was also daunting from the point of learning the software. In the past I had worked with other editing software such as the Media 100, Adobe Premiere, Avid, and had spent a little time with After Effects, though had been away from it for a couple of years in order to focus on language study and an experience abroad. Fortunately, I had been

working heavily with Flash in my spare time immediately before beginning research at the College of Fine Arts and found work I had done with that served as an acceptable foundation for going deeper into the software I needed to learn.

I first cut everything in Final Cut Pro. After I had that version I took it into After Effects to put it together the 8:3 aspect ratio. I remember the first time I placed a clip of 4:3 footage into the After Effects composition window. I had a short burst of panic similar to the kind you get when you stare at a blank page before beginning your literary masterpiece (it was a dark and stormy night...). My first thought was, Ok, what now? In order to help myself along I spent an inordinate amount of time glued to my G4 and the necessary software, completing tutorials from various resources, referring to bibles, books, charts of shortcuts, inspirational material, poking, prodding, examining, (hey what happens if I do this...) and over time began to feel comfortable within the technology I had to harness in order to complete this documentary.

## Rendering

‘... You can't look in any direction without wondering how to render it.’  
David Kraics

‘... You call in sick in order to render.’  
David Kraics<sup>85</sup>

I cannot fail to mention rendering. I rendered nights and worked days. My little G4 and accompanying hard drives were worked around the clock. Rendering inhabits your mind. You wake up in the morning and rush to your computer—is the render done? Is it ok? If you start a render before bedtime you check it compulsively and count the number of frames to go in order to calculate the time. It took three days to render *what brand <are you?>*, of which I did several drafts. If someone asks you what you are doing it seems you are always doing something *and rendering*. You are always rendering. You begin to wonder how long it would take to render a simulation of the real world in a giant computer and other rendering related thoughts influenced by philosophical deliberation first brought to widespread attention with the Matrix Trilogy.

I've crossed boundaries I'd never imagined. Now months later there is a finished project that I poured my heart, my guts, a few teeth, graying hairs, as well as plenty of tears into — and it feels good.



**Figure 32: Boy who said he would be happy when he sees his Dad.**



**Figure 33: Clive Hamilton composited with a photo from a 'Take back the streets' protest.**

'I need my conscience to keep watch over me  
To protect me from myself  
So I can wear honesty like a crown on my head  
When I walk into the Promised Land  
We've been too long American dreaming  
And I think we've all lost the way'

- Dead Can Dance -<sup>86</sup>

'It's the first day of the rest your life'

- Timo Maas -<sup>87</sup>

**4** **HAPPINESS!**

# The First Day of the Rest of Our Lives

## The Little Things

Perhaps the best answer I found to some of the questions raised in *what brand <are you?>* come from the small boy when he said, ‘My Dad’s in Canberra now, he has to work, and I haven’t seen him for a long time so when I see him that’s gonna make me happy,’ (Fig. 32).<sup>88</sup> It’s the little things that matter. It’s those exact things that I focus on in the last section of the documentary, ‘Happiness!’. I did this in several ways—first, through presenting opinions from a range of people on how they view happiness. Second, through discussing one of the most important insights that have been gained into happiness to date—the concept of flow, and third, I concentrated on what a few people are doing in their lives that create a positive difference.



**Figure 34: A still image from the introductory title sequence.**

Directing energy in this way is also a parallel for how we as individuals might change the focus in our lives from being consumed by brands and having more, to deciding from one day to the next, to center on something more meaningful. One of my colleagues at work shared her story, which is an excellent example of that.

## **Spilled Milk and Broken Glass**

When she was twenty-three she used to collect blown glass artworks. Her favorite piece was a delicate glass rose. One day when she was moving house, the rose broke. She was so upset about this rose that it tore her apart. She had a good cry over the loss of her rose and while she was grieving she realized that she never wanted to feel that way again. She never wanted to feel that her heart was broken over a *thing*; she never wants to feel that attached to an object again.

As she explained, at twenty-three it's a glass rose, at thirty-three it's a trophy house, with the picket fence, the car, the right husband, the holidays, and you don't want to give that up. You will do anything to protect these things because in society without these things you are nothing. You aren't protecting the *things*, so much as, *who you are with them*. This affects your outlook on the world, you become jealous, protective; you will do anything and everything to protect your status—to keep it or to elevate it. That's why you might be unwilling to embrace other ways of life, why you may lack compassion, why you will walk blindly through your days, because your entire focus, your whole being is geared towards earning money which will secure your place. We don't know who we are if we don't have these things. They are the security blanket for adults.

'And I never want to feel that way again,' she repeated.

Her story is even more powerful when you know that she meant what she said. She is a downshifter—she no longer, spends time on the hair, the make up, the nails, the new bag or two every season, trendy clothes, the entire cycle of more, more, more, and as she said, her outlook to people and to what this life is about has changed. In a single moment she made a decision that she implemented over time, and ten odd years later she is a totally different person from who she was then.

## Meaningful Ways

A similar decision as that made by my colleague at work was certainly at some point made by Paul Moulds. As the head of Oasis Youth Support Network, a refuge for homeless children, Mr. Moulds' entire life is devoted to helping others. Of course, this kind of life isn't something that everyone would be able to handle. Other people may find their interest lay in the arts, like Nick Bleasel or Sherlock. They use their art to poke fun, to increase awareness, to promote messages of peace and harmony. Sherlock dreams of setting up a meeting where seven people from differing age ranges, representing every nation of earth would all gather to live together, under the auspice of attempting to find solutions for or at least the right questions, to form a basis for promoting worldwide peace. As part of that dream he's formed the Unicorn Foundation (The United Nations Intelligence Council Organizing Respectful Negotiations for Peace). Dr. Clive Hamilton is Executive Director of The Australia Institute, a think tank that works to 'create a vision of a more just, sustainable and peaceful Australian society and to develop and promote that vision in a pragmatic and effective way.'<sup>89</sup> In his book *Growth Fetish* he proposes an alternative to growth-based economics.<sup>90</sup> While achievements of these sorts may seem out of range for some of us, as I proposed in the documentary, kindness isn't. Juan Mann's adventures in sharing free hugs on Pitt Street Mall in Sydney, is one example of that. It's wacky, it's wild, it's silly, but there's no denying that Juan's antics spread joy, and as Sherlock so aptly said, life is about stringing together moments of joy, not misery.<sup>91</sup> One way to do that is through engaging in activities from which you get a sense of flow, which was also highlighted in the last section of the documentary. A key element discussed by Csikszentmihalyi in his book, *Flow*, was the act of balancing reflection with activity.<sup>92</sup> With reflection you can ask yourself questions like, when am I most happy and what do I need in order to do bring a sense of meaning into my life? You may be at your happiest playing with your children and find that when you are taken away from this activity due to long hours on the job etc., then your life quality feels diminished. Through, stringing together associations such as this, actively reflecting on where you are most happy, one may begin to create meaning for experiences, and a purpose for each step forward.



**Figure 35: Sherlock's Art.**

What the last section of this project has attempted to do is to highlight what some people are doing straight from their hearts, as in the case of Sherlock with his art or Mr. Moulds through his efforts with children. This project has attempted to understand our emotional attachments to objects and the meaning of happiness in the current society. Certainly, insights into brands and happiness, has been explored, as well as the way we are led to believe that you cannot have happiness without the right brands or symbols of meaning. The real value of this project, however, lies in the questions raised—prompting the viewer to reflect their significance on a personal level—and the meaning that can arise from the contemplation of their answers.

### **Small Steps**

Numerous trends indicate that the West's focus on objects, and its notions that happiness depends upon the attainment of more things, is changing. As a response to the sweatshop conditions in third world communities and 'Free Trade Zones' that form the backbone of our massive choice between different things in the West, Fair Trade stores have sprung up.<sup>93</sup> Unlike free trade, fair trade 'guarantees a living wage', it encourages small-scale production, compensates 'producers for operating responsibly' and works to establish 'a

sustainable, balanced relationship between buyer and seller'.<sup>94</sup> When you choose to buy fair trade products you are choosing support small-scale farmers or artisans rather than large corporations.

Businesses such as fair-trade stores could possibly lead the way in creating a better future. The Body Shop, one of the first companies to become well known for its ethical stance drew lots of attention for refusing to test on animals, for protesting the gulf war, and for taking on Shell in the early 1990's.<sup>95</sup> In *Beautiful Corporations*, Paul Dickinson and Neil Svenson envision a future where 'corporations will touch the earth lightly, not using physical resources unnecessarily,' and they will see people as 'human talents.'<sup>96</sup> If people demand change corporations will respond if for no other reason than because they depend on their consumers for their livelihood. Corporations will evolve as humans evolve, thus it's quite possible that in the future they will be the driving force behind taking responsibility for others and this planet.

The situation today, however, stands that the numerous beautiful, though often useless items that are available constantly tempt us. We are immersed in an environment populated by advertising and marketing, and that extends to the very smallest among us, who are targets of 'cradle-to-grave' marketing. Some countries in the European Union have recognized the power that ads have and through legal action admitted that they may be harmful to children.

Norway and Sweden have banned television advertising to children under 12 years of age; in Italy, advertising during TV cartoons is illegal, and toy advertising is illegal in Greece between 7 AM and 11 PM. Advertising before and after children's programs is banned in Austria.<sup>97</sup>

We have also seen a worldwide challenge to the pursuit of money and materialism through the numbers of downshiffters. In Britain, 'a quarter of adults have voluntarily made a long-term change in their lives that resulted in them earning an average of 40 percent less.'<sup>98</sup>

There is a development in Australia in which ‘nearly a quarter of Australian adults have downshifted.’<sup>99</sup> Again, that means they have chosen to slow down in order to have more time for things such as relationships, and as a result have less income and spend less time at work. This choice represents a conscious decision that having things such as a nice house, a cool car, a well-respected job, designer clothes, and lavish holidays are not what these people choose to define as the most meaningful in their lives. It does not indicate a vow of poverty, just changes in personal priorities, though a decision such as this one is not easy, and not something that everyone could handle. Until downshifters become more common they are swimming upstream, however, simply discussing the topic will create awareness that, if you are unhappy, there are alternatives and downshifting is just one of them.

Existing alternatives are now gaining more recognition on the political front. In *Growth Fetish*, Clive Hamilton has called for downshifting at a political level and ‘a transition to a post-growth society’.<sup>100</sup> He points out ‘Western society’s preoccupation with economic growth and the manifest failure of higher incomes to improve wellbeing as the great contradiction of modern capitalism.’<sup>101</sup> He advocates eudemonism, (taken from the Greek: Eudemonia) which is a ‘political ideology and system of ethics’ that among other ideas ‘promotes the proper appreciation of the sources of well-being.’<sup>102</sup> Taking wellbeing into account when calculating progress is not a far-fetched idea. ‘Ruut Veenhoven, a psychologist at Erasmus University in the Netherlands has dedicated much of his career to studying measures of life satisfaction and believes that eventually such indicators will replace GNP.’<sup>103</sup> Indeed, such ideas have been around for a long time. In 1972, the king of the tiny Himalayan nation declared that his country's development should be measured not by purely economic indicators such as gross national product (GNP), but by gross national happiness (GNH).<sup>104</sup> A year following that, Schumacher wrote in *Small is Beautiful, Economics as if People Mattered*, ‘An entirely new system of thought is needed, a system based on attention to people, and not primarily attention to goods,’ he wrote further that ‘the aim should be to obtain the maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption.’<sup>105</sup>



**Figure 35: A happy couple.**

With each moment we are at a crossroad, and in the words of Gandhi, ‘As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world...as in being able to remake ourselves.’<sup>106</sup> The world is a reflection of its inhabitants. Until we as people begin to respect ourselves, and the land we inhabit, there will be violence, there will be destruction, there will be wars. There is no time like now to start respecting ourselves, to begin to forgive ourselves as well as others, and to use compassion as our sword. It is only when we change ourselves that we will see the changes we desire.

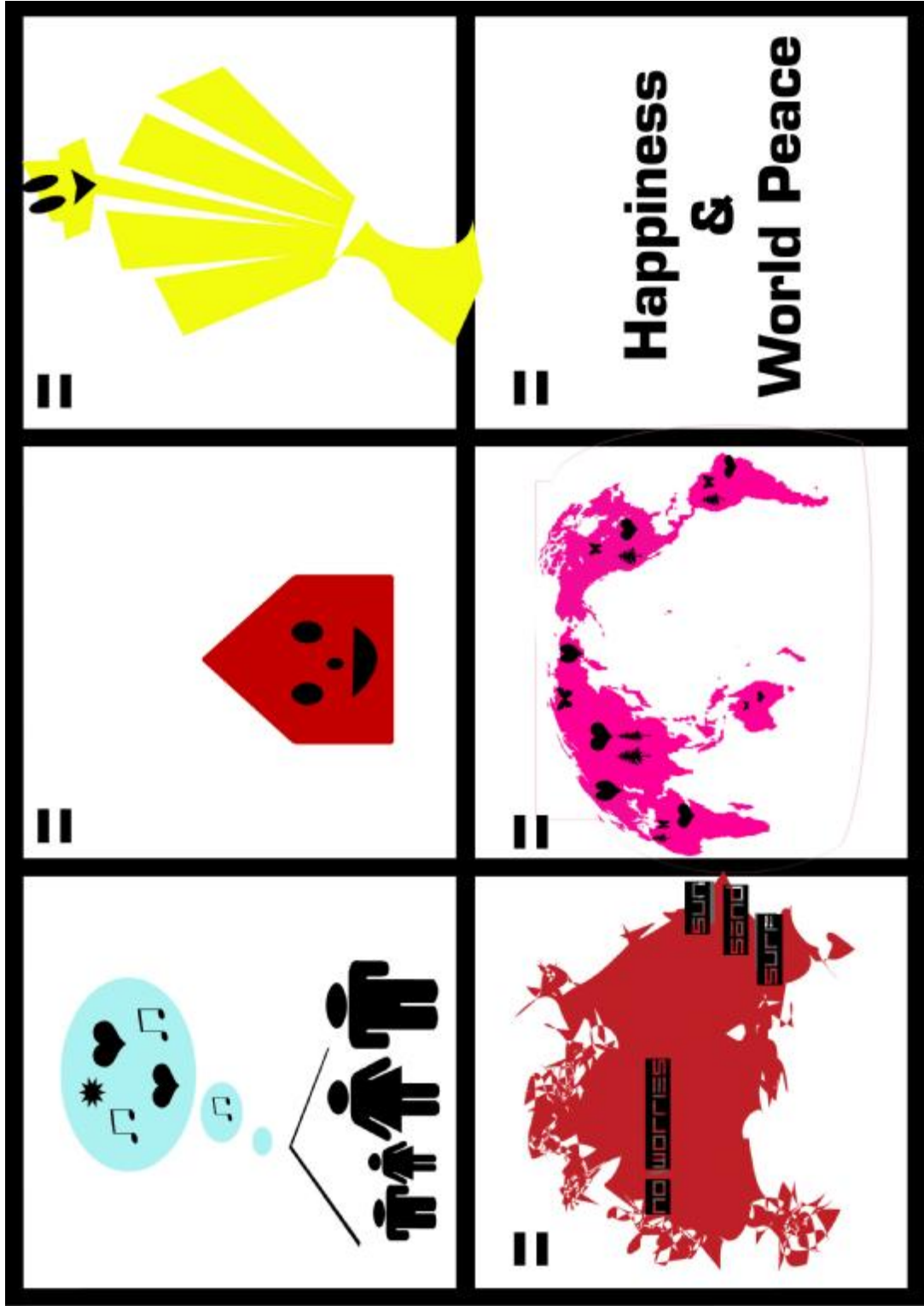


Figure 37: A formula for happiness and world peace that is theoretically very achievable though practically it may need some time to manifest.

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## 4 Happiness!

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# Appendix A

what brand <are you?>  
*reconnoitering happiness*

project planning sheet and script

**VIDEO/AUDIO**

**GRAPHICS/FOOTAGE  
INTERCUT**

## **TITLE INTRO**

A bad-legged emu walks across three screens  
towards A didgeridoo. He walks blows in it.  
Title: bad leg emu

Title: in association with

Title: poem-maker.com present:

Introductory montage

**Title of the Film: what brand <are you?>**  
Reconnoitering happiness

## **Title: Brand?**

Sherlock: brand?

Mother and daughter: Ripcurl, Mambo, Roxy, Quicksilver, Rusty...	
Couple: Kath and Kim	
Sherlock: it's a name given to some item that you buy.	Title: Sherlock of the Quay
Franco Marinelli: Brands aren't just advertising. They're kind of symbols for in a way, of recognition for what things are	Title: Franco Marinelli - Commercials Director
Group of girls: Swatch, Nike, Addidas...	
Sherlock: Brand?	
Franco Marinelli: Brand?	
Mark Green: Brand?	
Paul Moulds: Brand?	
Group of Girls: Swatch, Nike, Addidas	
Mark Green: A brand is a combination of emotional and rational attributes associated with a product or service.	Title: Mark Green – Group Accounts Director, Saatchi & Saatchi
Sherlock: It could be baked beans; it could be Heinz baked beans.	Graphic: baked beans on wall
Man: The Sydney Morning Herald,	
American Girl: Toyota	
British Girl: Mercedes	
Sherlock: or um, Vegemite.	Graphic: Vegemite on wall
<b>Short interview with Vegemite</b>	
Sherlock: and I like Vegemite	
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: The term brand means to me, an image of something, an image that's very closely associated with a particular product.	SBS logo blown up
Mark Green: Essentially, it's how people perceive that product or service from an emotional and rational viewpoint.	Article: Label Whores
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: It's also I guess, associated with more than the product, but the benefits of that particular product.	Article: Basic Steps On the Path to Wealth

<p>Mark Green: So if you take for example a car such as a Toyota Camry. From a rational perspective from the customer they would be thinking that they want v6 power they want it to go reasonably quickly to have sound acceleration to be fuel efficient to be economical etcetera but they would also buy into that product from an emotional perspective.</p>	<p>Traffic from darling harbor 2.OH WHAT A FEELING (Toyota slogan)</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: There is visual branding and audio branding. A particular series of notes in a TV commercial can be a brand as much as a visual symbol. (Over sound of kookaburra)</p>	<p>Graphic: audio waves</p>
<p>Mark Green: That product would say something about them because they drive it every day so they would have a reaction with the product that is also emotional. That could be from the point of saying I drive a Camry because I don't need a flash car to signpost who I am to the world or it could be that I drive a Camry because that says something about me, I'm an understated individual. The Camry sums up who I am.</p>	<p>Title: Mark Green – Group Accounts Director, Saatchi &amp; Saatchi Traffic at Kings Cross, Photo of the Camry, Text: the Camry sums up who I am.</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: The swastika was a brand of Nazi Germany in a way and when people see the swastika today it still holds true of being a brand of something people don't like. The giant M's of McDonalds are something that people equate as a brand of the McDonalds corporation.</p>	<p>Archive footage, Hitler's speech with swastika in background WWII tank McDonalds cup littering the grass</p>
<p>Tyson Colette: It's a 'm.' I see m from chips!</p>	<p>McDonalds bag with koala attached Subtitles</p>
<p>British young men: Ferrari, M--?-, Ripcurl, McDonalds</p>	

<p>Mark Green: Brands have become, started to become associated with what we call, say, er words: brands are faster brighter bolder, people have come to expect that and to actually deliver product differentiation and to stand out from that plethora of brands all shouting different product virtues you need to establish this emotional connection and be loved as well as respected.</p>	<p>As in factory, row of desaturated products, e.g.: brand mm (crunchier)</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: The United States flag is very much a brand of that nation. It's used its propagated; people hold it up in high esteem. They're very, (he beats his chest) it's a very powerful brand, just as the image of stars and stripes. More so than probably a lot of other flags out there. It represents a great deal more than just a flag.</p>	<p>USA flag scaling up, Flag montage The Australian flag big as well as little.</p>
<p>Mark Green: At Saatchi &amp; Saatchi we see lovemarks as a super-evolved brand. It's a brand that's built on a function as well as an emotion. The difference between a lovemark and a brand is that a lovemark delivers beyond people's expectations of great performance. . A lovemark is also product that people love and respect.</p>	<p>Lovemarks list, 1-41. (from lovemarks.com) Type: Lovemarks are super evolved brands (function) (emotion)  Type. A lovemark is a product that people love and respect</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: One could say the cross is a symbol of Christianity in a way. These things are archetypal images and in a Jungian sense an image or a symbol is a powerful tool for recognition or recall.</p>	<p>Angel In TV, Cross, Angel Picture, from my undergraduate work, 'Salva Veritate'. Picture from Graceland Sydney Morning Herald Article: 'Brand Your Soul It'll Fetch a Higher Price'.</p>
<p>Mark Green: Lovemarks can be different things for different people. What is a lovemark for me personally may not be a lovemark for you. But just generally speaking I would say, Sydney opera house, the Holden commodore, vegemite, I tell you some of our sporting teams as well, whether its our cricket team, at certain points in time, our Australian swimmers.</p>	<p>Montage of photos including: Nudie, Converse Allstar, opera house, Holden commodore, vegemite, etc..</p>

<p>Franco Marinelli: It gets down to fundamental essence if people really care. To be honest with you, for me, people can make decisions but fundamentally they're lazy. They want to feel like their part of something. It's really how you integrate the brand into society.</p> <p>Nike is really famous for that.</p>	
<p>Mark Green: My personal lovemarks would be, Manchester united, I'm quite even to a pair of sort of Nike trainers. My favorite pair of running shoes, to my favorite restaurants.</p>	<p>Manchester United Room Nike cartoon shoes</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: the Nike brand swoosh is very recognized it has that symbol. Coke has that wave,. Nike has the swoosh,</p>	<p>He traces out graphics of the "swoosh" and the "wave".</p>
<p>Josh Peachy: I went past a shop at town hall and I saw a pair of shoes I wanted they're Nike and they got springs in them for cushioning, so they've got suspension and they were something like 195 dollars. (Reverb on 195 dollars)</p>	<p>Title: Josh Peachey – Former Homeless Youth Broll, people walking</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: When you think about things like coca cola and Nike, coca cola is lolly water. It's just a bit of fizzy water with a bit of, you know.</p>	
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: The classic is Nike You don't just think of running shoes you think of achieving things and success in the sporting arena.</p>	<p>Scrolling Nike ad Text: Nike, classic, achieve</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: Nike I mean their basically plastic shoes</p>	<p>Falling plastic shoe</p>
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: That's obviously what they've tried to create with a great line just do it.</p>	<p>Text: NIKE, just do it</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: with kind of most of them bad designs</p>	<p>Text: bad designs</p>

Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: So they've obviously created an image much more than just a running shoe.	Text: IMAGE
Franco Marinelli: mostly bad designs, made in Vietnam for five bucks.	Text: Vietnam, \$5
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: JUST DO IT	Text: just do it
Franco Marinelli: and the rest is marketing	Text: and the rest of it's MARKETING
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: JUST DO IT	Full screen: text: just do it
Josh Peachey: NIKE	
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: JUST DO IT	Text: just do it
Sherlock: It troubles me a little bit about how much people spend on their shoes you know.	
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: JUST DO IT	Full screen: text: just do it
Josh Peachey: NIKE	
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: JUST DO IT	Text: just do it
Franco Marinelli: plastic shoes	Full screen: text: plastic shoe
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: running shoe	
Franco Marinelli: bad designs	Full screen: text: bad designs
Josh Peachey: Nike	
Paul Moulds: Young people with no shoes only want to wear Nike shoes	
Franco Marinelli: Nike	
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: just do it	Full screen: text: just do it
Paul Moulds: crazy isn't it	
Josh Peachey: Nike	
Franco Marinelli: Swoosh	
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: Nike	
Franco Marinelli: swoosh	Nike swoosh
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: Nike	
Franco Marinelli: swoosh	Nike swoosh
Josh Peachey: NIKE	
Black screen: sound of plane, followed by "JUST DO IT"	
<b>Interview with NIKE</b>	

<b>HAPPINESS?</b>	
Family: Cats, surfing, good food, nice wine, friends, yah, what about you? Insects, minotaur, labyrinths, dragons? Harry likes dragons. Harry likes play station. Oh ya, now we're talking. Xbox	Family tiled left and right
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: In very professional terms happiness is a positive emotion.	Text: positive emotion
Cut to: people playing violent video games	
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: Psychologist have actually defined happiness further and what we know is that happiness is probably not just one emotion in fact happiness is an umbrella term that covers a range of positive emotions, so happiness is probably not one thing, and it certainly varies from person to person so it is a very subjective experience.	Title: Dr. Timothy J. Sharp – Director of The Happiness Institute Jugglers
Welsh Speaking young woman	Subtitles: food, dogs and tele. Image of: a burger, a dog, television
Chinese boy and girlfriend	Subtitles: money, career and family Images of: a family, a tie, and money.
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: Happy people think about things differently for example. They think of things in a more optimistic more positive way. For optimism to work and this is certainly something we teach, it needs to include an element of realism. But certainly there's no doubt at all that the way you think about things is a significant determinant of how you feel and so happiness to a large extent depends on optimism and the good thing is optimism can be taught, if you're not naturally good at it you can learn to think more optimistically.	Happy people montage

<p>Music Man at Coogee:  What makes me happy is when I wake up in the morning and I open my eyes and I say thank god I've got another day. And I walk along here look at the beautiful beach see lovely people like yourself and I'm happy, I'm happy, that's all. I've got a beautiful family that makes me happy and as long as there's no fighting, aggravation and wars, we'll get happier, that's right isn't it?</p>	
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp:  We also know from the research that happy people tend to have a clearer sense of their life purpose of their direction. We know for a fact that happy people tend to perceive they have more control over their lives. Its hard to be happy if you feel that everything is out of control</p>	Broll: people walking at circular quay
<p>Cut to: montage of images representing: "out of control"</p>	
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp:  There are some basic life control strategies that can be helpful things like time management, priority management, also things like meditation and relaxation skills that can help people gain a sense of control over their moods.</p>	Broll: people walking, filmed at level of ankles
<p>Mark Green:  Happiness to me is all about the relationships I have with family and friends. Also when possible the ability to give back to all those people,</p>	South African family on a normal day
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp:  so if we look at those things that do achieve happiness they are all in a sense intra personal. Or interpersonal factors, they're not external factors like your clothes your car.</p>	Free Hugs Advocate, Juan Mann in action Title: intrapersonal, interpersonal, not
<p>Group of Kids:  having money  being loved by somebody  what makes you happy?</p>	
<p>Title: What makes you happy? (Over sounds of the city)</p>	Fractal lights n grid

<b>Happiness or is it?</b>	
<p>Tyson Colette: Shrek and The Wiggles, and I got Nemo. I got a Spiderman doll. Gem's got Spiderman too. Gem does. Gem and Tom. We got Spiderman. We all have Spiderman. He's a good guy. He goes like this.</p>	<p>Sydney Morning Herald Article: The Color of Money (picture of Shrek) Title: Tyson Colette - 3 years old Article: Webbed Warrior Sydney Morning Herald Article: Banking on Blockbuster (with picture of Spiderman)</p>
<p>Mark Green: At Saatchi &amp; Saatchi there is an idea that brands can influence people in a big way and the role of advertising plays an important role in people's lives.</p>	<p>Picture of Spiderman billboard Tyson shows his Spiderman skills Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: You walk along the street and there's billboards, you turn on the TV turn on the radio and most commercial stations anyway, we are bombarded by images including brands. And what unfortunately although its not an entirely bad thing unfortunately it distracts people.</p>	<p>Brand logo montage</p>
<p>Nick Bleasel: For the most part I don't find advertising as threatening as a lot of other people do because I'm aware that it doesn't work just because its there. You can say whatever you like about how much a bank likes you but no one's going to believe that.</p>	<p>Title: Nick Bleasel - Artist Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Mark Green: Brands and products and all this type of stuff is actually providing a lot of commonalities and bringing out all the similarities in people from one country to another. Whether you are in Israel Tokyo or Portugal you're drinking coca cola and listening to your ipod and hearing Christina Aguilera on the radio so its there's a lot of similarities from one country to another and its all about what people enjoy about life.</p>	<p>Graphic: world (where we are all the same)</p>

<p>Paul Moulds: All the time the young people that we work with are walking past seeing nice cars, happy families, seeing people wearing expensive clothes eating at nice restaurants enjoying this high standard of living and yet they worry everyday where am I going to get my next meal, where am I going to find a bed for the night, how am I ever going to get out of this situation.</p>	<p>Title: Paul Moulds – Director of Oasis Youth Support Network Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: If we look at our society, we certainly in Sydney Australia we live in a capitalist society, and that's not necessarily a bad thing but as part of a capitalist society and for a capitalist society to work well we obviously need businesses and for businesses to succeed we need advertising and marketing, now again that's not necessarily a bad thing but it is a very powerful force. A very powerful force That we're faced and we're confronted with every minute of every day.</p>	<p>Title: Dr. Timothy J. Sharp – Director of The Happiness Institute Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Nick Bleasel: You can watch a TV commercial about a bank saying they love you, and the only way that you would believe that necessarily is to not have exposure to a bank.</p>	<p>Brochure: Anz Bank (that says free Coffee and Krispy Kreme donut etc...)</p>
<p>Paul Moulds: And its this huge golf between what they have and what the rest of society has that causes often some of the bitterness the anger the resentment to build up in them. It makes them feel alienated, it makes them feel shut out of the community it makes them feel that they don't belong.</p>	<p>Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Mark Green: Brands and lovemarks and all this sort of business can make choice easier. They can make the actual purchase decision easier by highlighting the products point of difference and why it's relative for their lives.</p>	<p>Title: Mark Green - Group Accounts Director, Saatchi &amp; Saatchi Broll: McDonalds, subway etc.</p>

<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: It's easy to get distracted it's easy to get sucked into: Oh that looks nice, I'd like a more expensive shirt or a faster car but at the end of the day it wont lead to happiness</p>	<p>Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Mark Green: Creating brands and messages that are easier for people digest is going to be really powerful and that will also make people generally happier because they don't have to sift through all of that hard work information to get what they want.</p>	<p>Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Franco Marinelli: The most recent commercial I did was a youth market commercial for a brand called oxygen, that was being sold throughout the south East Asia region and China. What these people were doing is they weren't even manufacturing clothing they were buying cheap clothing in china and bringing it to our region doing a slick advert campaign, branding it as oxygen, putting the labels on it and selling it. The point is that people weren't even looking at the clothes they were wearing the clothes because of the brand and how it was sold.</p>	<p>Title: Franco Marinelli - Commercials Director Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets</p>
<p>Nick Bleasel: A lot of the negative aspects about advertising and the marketing world I think are more appropriate as criticism of capitalism. If you banned advertising you would still have capitalism you would still have companies doing things that are ultimately bad for the individual</p>	<p>Title: Nick Bleasel – Artist Photo-montage taken from the advertising in the streets Pan of Sydney</p>
<p><b>Interview with coke</b></p> <p>Title: In a recent study by news poll, 2/3 of Australians say they can't afford to buy everything they really need.</p>	

<p>Dr. Clive Hamilton: And when we broke it down by income group we found that the top quintile the top 20 percent so the richest people in one of the richest countries in history, half of them said they can't afford to buy everything they really need.</p>	<p>Title: Dr. Clive Hamilton, Executive Director of The Australia Institute Moving Telstra billboard on Pitt St. Sydney</p>
<p>TEXT: Do you have everything you really need?</p>	
<p>Paul Moulds: That sort of materialistic emphasis in society, always never being satisfied unless you've got the next best brand. Or wearing the right label or driving the right vehicle, it fuels this expectation that everyone can have, and we see it amongst young people who have nothing. They're absolutely so concerned about what brand of clothes these are young people who have nothing no money often come to us with no belonging but they're choosy about what they'll put on their back. Because there's this creation in the community to be accepted, to be cool, you have to wear the right clothing have the right brand name on you.</p>	<p>Title: Paul Moulds – Director of Oasis Youth Support Network Moving Telstra billboard on Pitt St. Sydney Pan of storefront: Giorgio Armani</p>
<p>Sherlock: One of the things that would make me the happiest in the world would be to be shutting down arms and ammunition factories and building ice cream factories. I think kids need more ice cream out there. Lets face it, if you look at a kids and say would you want this hand grenade or would you rather this ice-cream, that's pretty simple isn't it?</p>	<p>Broll: Sherlock's desk and home</p>
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: I don't think there's anything wrong with selling those things, where people go wrong is buying them with the belief that they will lead to happiness, if someone buys a fast car because they like fast cars good luck to them, I think that's fine. But if they buy a fast car because they think it will cause happiness I think in a lot of cases they'll be disappointed</p>	<p>Sale sign montage</p>

<p>Paul Moulds: So you got to say where is that coming from and its fueled by this mad consumer mentality this material instinct that to be an acceptable cool person in our community you got to wear a certain type of look. I think that's a tragedy and I think we do pay for it in all sorts of ways.</p>	<p>Workers plastering up poster of model in David Jones window</p>
<p>Flash to three pictures of bed in street and homeless man</p>	
<p>Lady in park: my family my loved ones around me</p>	
<p>Boy in park: don't know</p>	
<p>Lady in park: contentment in myself</p>	
<p>Boy in park: don't really know</p>	
<p>Lady in park: money</p>	
<p>Boy in park: I don't know</p>	
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: There's a lot of research into happiness so we actually know quite a lot about what makes people happy we also know quite a lot about what doesn't make people happy and we know for a fact that money, income, the type of job you do or the level of job you have, the sort of car you drive the size of your house the brand of your jeans and even believe it or not the type of cola you drink. These things don't actually make people happy there's no doubt about it.</p>	<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp – Director of The Happiness Institute Montage from Queen Victoria Building Fountain/poster at Eastgardens mall</p>
<p>Tall boy: surf, my phone, lifestyle Short boy: money, a home, lifestyle</p>	<p>Pan of Coogee beach</p>
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: people do consciously or unconsciously believe that they will be happier if they've got a better something when they have a better job. Part of the problem with that is that it perpetuates the myth that happiness is somewhere else, often in the future. Lots of people say I'll be happy when something happens something changes.</p>	<p>Title: I'll be happier if... Flying gold rings Piano in background Picture of mansion Turning stars "win" Car Text: I'll be happier when</p>

Spotlight roves over green dollar sign. Behind dollar sign is the text: \$ = happiness (drum roll and clapping)	
Dr. Clive Hamilton: So there's a relentless ratcheting up of standards and increasing pressure to consume at higher and higher levels. The desire to emulate the lifestyles of the very rich has led to booming sales of trophy homes, luxury cars, professional quality home equipment and cosmetic surgery. We create our identities, and define ourselves more and more in terms of our consumptive behavior.	Broll: Queen Victoria Building Magazine Picture: Nicole Kidman 3. Magazine Picture: Lovely Manors (large mansions) Fancy car Wine Article: Never too young Dummies in David Jones window
Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: We're led to believe that those things are important and in fact the images within those ads and brands are, that if you do drink this type of cola you'll be happy if you wear this type of jean you'll attract the opposite sex, s I think those marketing devices are, without being too harsh are misleading. They are created to communicate to people that if you do a, b and c you'll be happy, when in fact you won't be happy. So, they're selling happiness in a somewhat misleading way	Telstra's moving billboard phone booths Foxtel TV offer Broll: Hoyts cinema Ad: big smile Broll: Inside McDonalds Ad: Tommy Hilfiger Ad: Vodafone, offers Ad; Free drinks when you buy a Vodafone sim Text: selling happiness
<b>Selling Happiness Montage</b>	
Tyson Colette: I want to get a BMW for myself to drive, when I'm bigger. Because I need to.	Title: Tyson Colette - Three Years Old
<b>Selling Happiness Montage continued...</b>	
<b>Happiness!</b>	
Couple: What makes me happy? To have good friends, good company, good health, and enjoy life and family.	Couple rehashed

<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: One of the other things that also important is that we know that happiness also comes from engaging in activities that create a sense of flow. They are those sorts of activities that when you are engaged in you lose track of time.</p>	<p>Full screen: kids playing cricket</p>
<p>Juan Mann When people stop after the hug and we stop and have a chat, usually they 'll be asking me why I'm doing this and why I'm out here hugging people what does it all mean, am I with a religion, no, and then sometimes I'll ask people if they are having a good day and they'll say no and they'll tell me all about their day and their life and usually you just get to meet someone you connect with them in a way, and its nice its refreshing to know that there are people out there who are willing to open up to other people and tell you what going on. There's a real human element to what I'm doing it's nice. It's enjoyable.</p>	<p>Title: Juan Mann - Free Hugs Advocate Broll: Juan Mann in action</p>
<p>Russian girl: Speaking Russian</p>	<p>Subtitles: education, love, children Graphics: schoolhouse, heart, baby</p>
<p>Paul Moulds: I've been here at Oasis 9 years now. What were trying to do is have a whole lot of opportunities that young people can actually taste things and say that maybe my life hasn't had much in it until now but now I can start to see that there are things I can do I'm not worthless I do have the capacity to make a contribution and to feel valuable as a person.</p>	<p>Title: Paul Moulds – Director of Oasis Youth Support Network Broll: city Glass shot in blue-room</p>
<p>Simple Simon: For me happines is, if you're born with two hands, two feet and a reasonable heart, the way I see it you're responsible for your own happiness, get off your ass and make it happen, there's too much to do out there to sit around whinging about not being happy. That's just honestly the way I see it you know?</p>	<p>Broll: bird snatching fish</p>

<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp: A lot of people report flow when they're exercising say, walking or running, its often when you are engaged in a particular hobby, artists for example, or I've seen a number of who paint or sew or knit who say that they can be engaged in an activity and several hours could go by and they've forgotten to eat or they've just totally lost track of time.</p>	<p>Broll: city to surf run, Sydney</p>
<p>Juan Mann: Well, its that or sit at home and watch tele.</p>	<p>Broll: Pitt Street Sydney</p>
<p>Cut to: a TV w/ static sound</p>	
<p>Juan Mann: I can come out here in the middle of the city I can meet thousands of new people I can hug everyone I can see people smile and laugh. Its like making a difference without doing too much hard work.</p>	<p>Broll: Collector for HIV, Broll: Wall outside Legge Gallery with Nick Bleasel's artwork</p>
<p>Paul Moulds My life is invested in people and I guess that a person that invests their life in money might get overjoyed if their shares have a huge return or they get some major winning in the financial area I just think its just a fantastic feeling to see someone over come a hurdle in their life a barrier in their life and you see that just with someone to journey with them to walk beside them and encourage them and provide some practical help sometimes that people no matter how hard life can be can change. And there's no greater thrill or feeling to see that.</p>	<p>Broll: Sherlock helps his friend.</p>
<p>Dr. Timothy J. Sharp Those types of activities where you get so involved that you don't even know what you're doing or you lose track of time, that's, the word that's used to describe that is flow. And we know that happy people tend to engage in more activities from which they get a sense of flow.</p>	<p>Broll: boxers, beach, city to surf run</p>
<p>TITLE: GOT FLOW? Over Ross riding a unicycle on the edge of water.</p>	

<p>Sherlock: I've been doing my art here. Including this big picture I've got, it says the pathway to peace and reach out in friendship. I was painting that here, when all these kids sat along the bench here like crows on a power -line and I was painting, and I wasn't thinking too much about anything except the painting and one kids said, what're you doing mister? And I was just painting away and I said, I'm painting the world with happiness</p>	<p>Broll: Sherlock shows his art</p>
<p>Optimistic girl: Chocolate, chocolate's good; everyone's got to have chocolate. Being optimistic, just deciding to yourself everything's not so bad, you can change what you want, it's all-good.</p>	<p>Broll: city</p>
<p>Juan Mann: I think one person can make a difference to another person's life maybe if even just making someone smile, for just a moment of their day it does make a difference. To show them something different and unexpected makes a difference. I think when they realize that you can go out there and make a gesture without harming yourself and without really making any real effort. Maybe it will catch on, maybe other people will come out here and do their thing as well.</p>	<p>Graphic: ideas for helpful things we can all do that make a positive difference.</p>
<p>Sherlock: So I painted this, which is the world, its faded a bit in the sun. And when I painted the world I put Australia here because I got this theory going on, Australia being the belly button of the world. I went around the outline of the countries in this gold line and I noticed as I was doing it I was connecting all the countries together. So then I thought I'll put those two lines together: <b>Paint the world with happiness connected by the golden thread of friendship.</b> That's what its about. Its learning to live together not learning to hate one another.</p>	<p>Text: Paint the world with happiness connected by the golden thread of friendship.</p>
<p>Small boy: My dad's in Canberra now, he has to work, and I haven't seen him for a long time so when I see him that's gonna make me happy.</p>	

<p>Dr. Clive Hamilton:          So I argue that we should focus on the things that really do matter better relationships, pursuing the things we find fulfilling, but above all and this is what all of the studies show, only reinforcing folk wisdom and that is to lead a worthwhile and fulfilling life there's one thing that dominates all other factors, and that is a sense of meaning and purpose. A sense of meaning and purpose in life, we know from all the studies, as well as intuitively, the thing that allows people to lie on their deathbeds and think it was worthwhile.</p>	<p>Title: Dr. Clive Hamilton, Executive Director of The Australia Institute          Photo-montage: reclaim the streets          Broll: Iraq war protest</p>
<p><b>Alternative ending:</b></p>	
<p>Writer from India:          We human beings in a different way are trying to find some meaning in life the only meaning in life is to evolve- mentally from the point of intelligence and from the point of to be good human beings or this life has no meaning. And we try to give meaning to this life according to our own thinking, our .... (torso?) of life. Dare make life meaningful otherwise this life has no meaning it just a splash of energy it is just by chance that we are here on this earth.</p>	<p>Photo-montage: reclaim the streets          Broll: Iraq war protest</p>
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