ARIADNE
The poet Edgar Allen Poe pondered whether “all that we see or seem” is “but a dream within a dream?” In the surreal realm of Inception, waking up is no guarantee that you are not still asleep. This made me reflect on the sharp distinction between “dream” and “reality.” We tend to think of our dream state as unreal, but it seems perfectly real when you are immersed in it. Only in rare cases of “lucid dreaming” can you become conscious that you are dreaming and learn to control it. The other side of the coin is that maybe our so-called ‘reality’ is not as stable and solid as we take for granted. When we die in this world, perhaps we wake up in another one that is even more real.

Socrates, the most famous Greek thinker, thought that most human beings have succumbed to a deep amnesia. Socrates today could have used the metaphor of being glued to a movie screen for so long that you forget there is a real world outside the cinema illuminated by a sun rather than a projector screen. Socrates thought the goal of philosophy was to go back outside into the light. Much of Western philosophy ever since has just been a variation on this basic concept. Even the 19th century Schopenhauer, who is one of the most influential modern philosophers, described the world as a dream-like phantasmagoria from which the enlightened human being must seek to awaken.

Eastern philosophy is no exception to this trend. The Buddha, when asked if he was a god, an angel or something else, simply replied “I am awake.” The ancient seers of India who wrote the Vedas and Upanishads thought that humanity needed to be guided from the dream of ignorance into the light of reality. This world was referred to as maya, often translated as illusion or dream. Eastern philosophy tended to go further and ask ‘If this is a dream, then who is the real dreamer?’ The modern Indian philosopher Sri Chinmoy replies, “each soul is an ever-blossoming dream of God.”

Many of the earliest known cultures claim the world was “dreamt” into existence and that we are still, collectively, dreaming that world today. This is the view, particularly, of many Native American shaman traditions. Australian Aboriginals speak of The Dreaming not only as the original process of creation but an ever-existing subliminal state that feeds into our everyday experience. This also points to another important sense in which the word ‘dream’ is used – as a way of imagining and visualizing our aspirations. To dream is to envision an alternative to our current experience of reality, and this is the first step towards making it happen.

Here we are in a new year. Let’s take this opportunity to change our dream. What do you really want? How about a world in which we use our energy and wealth to grow, nurture, heal and protect. We could start by doing away with the weapons of mutilation that scar the earth. War is a nightmare – as the United Nations says, it springs from the human mind. Do we need to keep dreaming the destruction of the planet? We could work alongside, and not against, nature so that our environment is both abundant and pure. That means clean water, air and healthy food for every person on earth. A balance and harmony restored. If that’s not ambitious enough, how about dreaming a real community of people united across the planet? Do we have the capacity to widen our hearts enough to reach the whole human family?

Not only are all these changes possible, but they require nothing more than a global shift in perspective. To use the vocabulary of the indigenous American shamans, they require a new dream to supplant the old. Enjoy this issue of Café Philosophy, and good luck with those New Year’s resolutions.

Tom McGuire, Auckland University Graduate
I was in Gisborne (on the east coast) for a few days last week and I went into a bookshop looking for a book I’d recently read called, *The Torrents of Spring* by Ivan Turgenev. I thought I’d buy it as a Christmas present for a friend. However, I was told the book was not in stock.

It was just on lunchtime and I discovered there was a cafe above the bookshop so I went up. I ordered a coffee and sandwich and sat down at a nearby table. For some reason the atmosphere in the café brought the memory of the book I’d been reading (*Torrents of Spring*) back to me.... The story starts off with the hero, Dimitry Sanin, a 22 year old entering a confectionary shop in a quite street in Frankfurt to buy a glass of lemonade and then falling in love with the beautiful young Italian girl, Gemma who serves him. Passionate and impetuous, he sells his estates in order to start a new life with Gemma, but his youthful vulnerability makes him prey to a darker, destructive passion. The story is not complicated by any social or political problems but it does show a profound understanding of the seemingly unavoidable calamities that can befall a man in his interactions with other people.

I’m not sure why the story came back to me so vividly, perhaps it was the heritage atmosphere in the café with it’s polished timber flooring and exposed brick walls or maybe the friendly service I received. Whatever it was, it made me remember the book I’d read, called the *The Torrents of Spring*. 
**“Schopenhauer Is Always Topical”**

An Interview with Rüdiger Safranski

2010 marked the 150th anniversary of the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer’s death. Thomas Köster spoke to Rüdiger Safranski about the timeless modernity of his thinking, about the joy of reading Schopenhauer’s work – and about Schopenhauer’s message that philosophy is not everything in life.

**Mr Safranski, you have recently published a Schopenhauer reader. Why should one still read the philosopher today?**

Because Schopenhauer had a model for thinking about life that was perfectly thought through. Schopenhauer paints an image of man in which the driving force of willpower plays the primary role, and reason a secondary one. This fundamental school of thought never becomes outdated. It is not subject to specific requirements of topicality that change according to the season or fashion.

**In your biography of Schopenhauer, which has just been reprinted, you write that one should “fall back on Schopenhauer in order to be completely up-to-date.” So he does reflect modernity after all?**

Yes, for we still have a tendency to overestimate reason as the force that controls life and history, despite the fact that the crimes of the 20th century, some of which were committed in the name of reason or supposedly for the sake of science, have made a number of things clear to us that would not have surprised Schopenhauer.

**What role does Schopenhauer play in today’s philosophy?**

Schopenhauer still has enormous influence in the general literary and artistic scene. The situation is rather different among professional philosophers. This has to do with the fact that Schopenhauer’s thought lies like a round ball in the 19th century. With Kant, one can carry on working indefinitely—so much is unclear. Schopenhauer’s view of mankind and the world is clear and calmly thought through to its conclusion. His philosophy is complete, in a pleasant and agreeable sense.

**What fascinates you personally about Schopenhauer?**

For me, one reason his philosophy is so alluring is that, in literary terms, it is so perfectly presented. Reading Schopenhauer is a great pleasure, an enormously enriching experience. In my view, the beginning part of the second volume of The World as Will and Representation is linguistically one of the best pieces of work ever produced by a western philosopher.

For another thing, Schopenhauer never leaves one in any doubt about the fact that for him philosophy is not all that life is about. The part that thinks will always be somewhat different to the part that lives. This is something that I find remarkable,
I read an article recently in the Oct/Nov 2010 Philosophy Now magazine. The article was entitled, ‘How to be a Philosopher’ and was written by Dr. Ian Ravenscroft.

The article listed 9 points about How to be a Philosopher.

In item 1, under the heading ‘What to Wear’ Ian talks about the clothes that philosophers prefer. He says that; ‘clothes can be a source of aesthetic pleasure and few philosophers are adamantly against pleasure,’ (although it should be a disinterested pleasure).

He goes on to say that, ‘philosophy is essentially an anti-authoritarian business,’ and because authoritarian regimes have a fascination for uniforms, philosophers that are tempted to wear a uniform would need to reconsider their philosophical credentials.’ But why would someone interested in philosophy choose to wear a uniform?

In items 2 and 3, we are told what philosophers eat and drink and in item 2 that; ‘there is a strong tendency towards vegetarianism, at least in contemporary English-speaking philosophy.” But he does not provide any evidence to support this statement.

In item 3 under the heading of ‘What to Drink’ he says that; ‘there’s an overwhelming preference amongst philosophers for red wine and coffee.’ Once again he does not say how he knows that philosophers prefer red wine except by quoting the ancient Roman writer, Pliny the Elder and adding a famous Latin phrase ‘in vino veritas’ which means ‘in wine there is truth,’ although the full quote is ‘in wine there is truth, in water there is health.’ The Chinese also have a similar quotation; (“After wine blurs truthful speech”). The Babylonian Talmud (תלמוד בבלי) also contains the passage: "דר או יא צעב", i.e., "in came wine, out went a secret."

To drink wine or any alcoholic substance, I would think, is contrary to the spirit of philosophy because alcohol affects one’s reason and ability to think clearly. It has been described (alcohol) by the German philosopher F. W. Nietzsche as a European poison because taken excessively it can damage almost every organ in the body, but is probably most famous for damaging the liver and brain. Alcohol is also largely responsible for many social problems. However, we could also say that many people drink alcohol and suffer no social/health problems. But should drinking be advocated for philosophers?

Socrates states in the Phaedo, (64d) "a philosopher must not be overly concerned with food, drink or love.”

One thing I believe Ian has missed in his article is to explain or describe the core meaning of the word "philosophy," which incidentally comes from the Greek φιλοσοφία (philosophia), which literally means “love of wisdom”, but was originally a word referring to the special way of life of the ancient Greek philosophers. I think ‘special way of life’ is significant and to illustrate this I’d like to refer to a few points made about this ‘special way of life’ by F. W. Nietzsche detailed in his book; On The Genealogy of Morals.

Nietzsche mentions two aspects of human life that distinguish a philosopher;

1. An irritation against Sensuality
2. An affection for Asceticism. (Self-denial and austerity).

Nietzsche states that; ‘if both are lacking in a philosopher, then – one can be sure of it – he is only a so-called philosopher.’ He then goes on to explain what he means;

‘every animal —therefore a philosophical animal—strives for an optimum of favorable conditions under which it can expend all its strength and abhors every kind of hindrance that could obstruct this path.’ He cites marriage as being one such hindrance and says; ‘a married philosopher belongs in comedy.’ Nietzsche mentions Heraclitus, Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz and Schopenhauer as great philosophers who never married.

Nietzsche himself was also never married. When describing the ascetic ideal in the case of a philosopher Nietzsche sees it as, ‘an optimum condition for the highest and boldest spirituality – not to deny existence but rather to affirm his existence.’ He then lists the sorts of things that the philosopher can do without in terms of the ascetic ideal; freedom from compulsion, disturbance, noise, freedom from tasks, duties and worries.’ He sees these ascetic ideals as so many bridges to independence.

Nietzsche then goes on to describe the three great slogans of the ascetic ideal; poverty, humility and chastity. He recognizes these three virtues as restraining an irritable pride or wanton sensuality. He also remarks on the difficulty of maintaining a will to the ‘desert’ against a love of luxury and refinement. His description of the ‘desert’ is rather poetic and is described as follows;

“The desert incidentally, that I mentioned, where the strong, independent spirits withdraw and become lonely – oh, how different it looks from the way educated people imagine a desert! – for in some cases they themselves are this desert, these educated people. And it is certain that no actor of the spirit could possibly endure life in it – for them it is not nearly romantic or Syrian enough, not nearly enough of a stage desert! A voluntary obscurity perhaps; an avoidance of oneself; a dislike of noise, honour, newspapers, influence; a modest job, an everyday job, something that conceals rather than exposes one; an occasional association with harmless, cheerful beasts and birds whose sight is refreshing; mountains for company, but not dead ones, mountains with eyes (that is with lakes); perhaps even a room in a full, utterly commonplace hotel, where one is certain to go unrecognized and can talk to anyone with impunity. – that is what desert means here.”

One final thing I’d like to mention is that the lives of the great philosophers (how they lived their lives) is an integral part of their philosophy, the part that attests to what they’ve proclaimed.

By Rob. Mason.

References;
The disturbing lyrics and the multi-layered sound-effects brilliantly evoke this predicament and its wider, ‘sane’ manifestations. Elsewhere the influences of Sartre, Kafka, Hesse among others are divined in songs of alienation such as Paul Simon’s ‘A Poem on the Underground Wall’ and Dylan’s ‘Ballad of Hollis Brown.’

The more positive side of existentialism, reinforcing individual integrity and responsibility is expounded in later chapters. The lone man or ‘hero’ seeking authentic identity and escaping false values is as much a classic rock theme as it is an existential one. Harris argues that an optimistic ‘neo-romantic’ picture of human nature developed among the counter-culture and found a voice in music: the prevailing Willy Loman (Death of a Salesman) type ‘organization man,’ rooted in Hobbesian cynicism was decried in favour of a model that saw man at his best when unrestrained by society. Joni Mitchell’s ‘Woodstock’ for example is seen as a portrayal of Rousseau’s innately good ‘noble savage.’ Relatedly, the rights of the individual became a major issue in the 1960’s America and Harris makes the most of the link between rock music, civil disobedience and the issue of state versus the individual.

The book’s second string is the only implicitly stated and yet highly conspicuous thesis that politically and culturally the sixties was an era of profound importance that greatly contrasted with the decades that preceded it and all that has happened since. Seven factors responsible for the ‘mood’ of the sixties are outlined. Including the sense of mission and empowerment felt by...
a younger generation who saw themselves and their icons (Kennedy, Martin Luther King etc) as victimized by an oppressive social order. A sense of release from the shackles of their parent’s generation and a conviction that they could do something about all that was wrong in the world made the sixties a unique ‘moment’ in history. Harris clearly feels this very strongly, but to his credit mostly avoids the ‘Big Chill’--esque nostalgia so common among the ‘Woodstock Generation.’

That an optimistic picture of human nature replaced a mood of cynicism may well be true, although assuming that the rock musicians who sang about this at the time were responding to a set of pressing social tensions and not directly to the romanticism of Rousseau or Thoreau, the correspondence with actual intellectual themes is weakened. An example of this type of problem is found in Harris’ treatment of Meatloaf’s Paradise by the Dashboard light. This is indeed a song, possibly written from experience, definitely full of wit and perspicacity, about sexual mores in the 1950’s and the situations they led to. It is however, any kind of treatise on sexual sublimation or an advocation of the theories of Norman O. Brown. Both popular films and novels are full of this kind of thing, but I don’t think it is accurate to say that they contain a subtext of serious intellectual comment.

The suggested incompatibility of the work’s parallel aims is most apparent in the final chapter. Harris writes:

“Never before in any period of human history have the ...beliefs and causes and emotions...of the times been so dramatically encapsulated in music...And never before...has a medium been in such a mutually interactive role with its message with each...influencing the other on such a grand scale. This is why understanding classic rock is essential to any serious understanding of the sixties.”

Fair point perhaps, but should he not be saying that understanding the sixties is essential for an understanding of classic rock? Otherwise he would seem to be losing sight of the stated primary aim of the book—to look at “intellectual themes...to be found...in rock music.” By over-emphasizing what should at most be an ancillary thesis he seems to have compromised the books whole raison d’être, with the result that at times it reads like one of those ‘Rock and Roll Years’ programmes that use music merely to illustrate newsworthy events of the time. Is the reason for this maybe that there is not enough to say purely about intellectual themes? Or is it that they do not hold together well enough and need to be bonded by a socio-political context? The latter is the more likely answer as Harris is clearly aware, there are many other examples of solid intellectual reference in rock music beyond what is mentioned in the book.

This toe-treading of the joint theses reaches a climax when he mourns the passing of the sixties mood and bemoans the fragmented state of rock music today (into rap, house, grunge, indie etc.) and its loss of any cohesive meaning. This is undeniably the case, but just as the music of the sixties was entwined with its times, is today’s music not representative of our current philosophical, political and sociological mood? Why should rock music survive as a central, influential voice or ‘religion’ (to which he likens it) in an age when it seems impossible for any single medium or idea to claim the mantle? An overwhelming sense of simplicity, of good versus evil, made impactful, coherent movements and beliefs in the sixties possible, but the Western World, if it were that way, certainly does not seem that way now.

On balance, Philosophy at 33 1/2 rpm is bigger than this flaw that I’ve outlined: it makes plenty of interesting comment on individual songs, admirably highlights the poetic qualities of many of them and induces the reader to think, or think again about the contents of their music collection. It should be of interest to serious rock fans, cultural historians and philosophers alike, and serve as a useful antidote to those who believe that all rock musicians have relaxed brains and think from below the waistline. Anyone who does think this would certainly do well to read this book, or better still listen to some of the music it recommends.

© Dr. Stuart Hanscomb 1994

STUART IS A PHILOSOPHY TEACHER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW,
PLEAS ALSO READ LEIGHTON EVANS RELATED ARTICLE ON PAGE 13 OF THIS ISSUE ENTITLED: “THE MANIC STREET PREACHERS.”
Don’t be put off by the fact that this book is a ‘Russian classic’, it is truly worth a read. Plus, it isn’t a thousand pages of depression like some others I could mention. The book, not surprisingly given the title, is concerned with the generation gap. But it is also concerned with Russian society at that time, embracing the modern world, disillusionment, the power of emotion, family dynamics, and change both individual and national. The book was written just after the emancipation of the serfs and is set just before this major event.

The story follows two recently graduated students called Yevgeny Bazarov and his friend Arkady Kirsanov as they travel around meeting various characters. Bazarov and Kirsanov are both ‘nihilists’ and while their beliefs are pretty tame by todays standards, their desire for change, dislike of the ‘system’, and rejection of emotion and embrace of science was revolutionary and shocking in its day. Mind you, so was a woman showing her knees – so it’s all relative. The characters they visit are almost archetypes of the various strata and political viewpoints of society at the time. It is through the interaction and contrasts with these various characters on their journey that the story is told. The society at the time was undergoing a massive upheaval and the fathers are struggling to adapt to these changes that are represented by their children. The younger generation transform too, as their nihilistic rejection of emotion is broken down by experience and love.

The novel is a true classic and is a strong contender for the first true Russian novel. It has influenced so many writers that you really should give it a try.

Ok, unless you are into this kind of literature you might be bored by the description above. So I should also mention that it includes mysterious but hot Russian widows, hippy chicks, disease, intrigue and even a duel with pistols.

Fathers and Sons can be read in a day. In my opinion, it would be a day well spent.

Reviewed by Jason Ward (The Word of Ward)
http://thewordofward.co.uk/?p=129


the woman on the lawnmower

finally she just lost her mind
this lovely neighbor of mine
school teacher whose man decided to just pick up and leave her for no particular reason on a motorcycle
with a much younger woman out to california and now she just gets on her lawnmower and mows her lawn
every midnight as you can hear the purr of her engine and those headlights.
in many ways i can relate to her and love to watch those lights
simply going back and forth across the night
and god how this fly-by-night sight so much helps
me to forget this godforsaken place like some strange secret escape
and for all you half-crazed uptight all-knowing no-it-all neighbors you can go fuck yourselves
as for me out in these deep and decrepit desolate suburbs she’s truly a breath of fresh air
then goes on to flick on her chandelier
and foggy front pair of porchlights
and you imagine yourself in there.
- joseph reich -
I went up to Albert Park recently to escape the tumult in Queen St. It was soothing in the park listening to the birds singing. However I knew I had to finish the shopping so I went back down towards High St. As I walked across Kitchener street I noticed a friendly looking café that seemed to beckon me in. It was called the Albert Park Café, so I wandered in and ordered a coffee. Inside the café I met Holly, the owner/manager and as she prepared the coffee we started talking. She told me that while visiting a relative in Florence, Italy she’d worked as a barista in a café there called the Bar Petrarca and liked it so much that when she returned to NZ in October ‘10, she decided she’d like to do the same sort of thing in Auckland.

Holly is certainly passionate about what she does, I could tell that from the fantastic coffee she made for me, but equally importantly she likes people, enjoys a chat and takes an interest in what you say.

The rest of the team include Ritchie the chef and Mirja who assists Holly. They offer a terrific range of yummy food that is all made lovingly on site.

The café is open early, 7am and closes around 4 in the afternoon, Monday to Friday and then Saturday 8am till 4pm with live music featured with brunch.
ELLE HUNT talks to third culture kids about what it means to be Kiwi—or not

Where are you from?

That question never fails to trip me up, because the truth is—I’m not sure.

I was born in Cairo; I speak Arabic, French and English; and I’m a citizen of Egypt, Algeria, New Zealand and Britain,” says Fairooz Samy.

“We immigrated to New Zealand in 2001, when I was 10, basically because my parents wanted somewhere nice for them to retire and me to grow up.

“It was a little odd at first, coming from Cairo to settle in quiet suburbia, which just doesn’t exist anywhere in Egypt. Everyone was nice, down-to-earth, super casual. You don’t get that level of ‘laid back’ in other countries.”

In Egypt, Fairooz had attended a British international school, “where there was this giant emphasis on the cultural differences between everyone.

“In New Zealand, I was this little freak who couldn’t even say ‘yes’ the same way they did,” she remembers.

“I was accepted as the token ethnic girl.”

Fairooz recalls making a “conscious decision” to start speaking with a Kiwi accent when she was about 11.

Nowadays, sure, I totally identify as a New Zealander—even more so when I’m overseas, but that’s probably because there isn’t anyone there who can tell me that I’m not,” she says.

“I’d be visiting family in Algeria and feel like a total tourist, starting every sentence with ‘Back home in New Zealand,’ and feeling patriotic whenever we’d eat New Zealand Lamb.

Despite being well established in her second home, Fairooz hesitates when I ask her for her definition of a New Zealander. “I’m not sure if I’m the best person to answer that,” she confesses.

“Is it all about backyard cricket, and school Kapa Haka? Maybe it’s as simple as the TV One ads make it out to be. Maybe New Zealanders are just laid back, hard working, generous, no-nonsense people, with such a population that there’s a tangible sense of camaraderie and dependability. Cheese on cheese, I know, but it’s giving me the warm fuzzies,” she says wryly.

Needless to say, Fairooz knows the advantages of having a couple of identities to select from.

“Whenever I get frustrated with some aspect of Kiwi life, I still roll my eyes and sort of thank god that I have a couple of other cultures to fall back on,” she remarks.

However, this has its drawbacks.

“It can get confusing, and I feel disloyal for taking such a pick-and-choos approach to who I consider myself to be,” admits Fairooz.

“I can’t escape the fact that racially, I’ll always be Arabic...but ironically, I’ve never met an Arab who really thought of me as authentic—Arabic isn’t even my first language. “I’ve always felt a tad phoney.”

Daan Kjartansson, a second-year student, was born in New Zealand to a Kiwi mother and an Icelandic father. He grew up in Iceland, but moved to Wellington to study at the university. He is a citizen of both countries, and speaks Icelandic and English fluently.

He says he had no problems adjusting to Kiwi life, and that ‘it just happened,’ as people at his university hall were interested in finding out more about his culture. “The only problem is that I think in Icelandic, and always have to translate it into English, and often forget the English words for something.” Although he admits that he’s, ‘becoming more Kiwi every day,’ Daan still sees himself as an Icelander.

“I still see Iceland as home, and all of my family still live there. I’m very interested in Norse mythology, which has played a big role in Icelandic history,” he says. “And Icelanders are all about soccer, and I play a lot of soccer myself. Icelandic music also influences me quite a lot, and I try to listen to some on a daily basis, so I don’t forget about Iceland.

Taste in music is one of the biggest differences Daan has noticed between his cultures. Although he’s quick to point out that he can’t generalize New Zealanders, he’s noticed that most are interested in ‘rugby, drinking, and listening to reggae.’

“The music here is quite different—there’s a lot of reggae and dub, which is probably influenced by the sun.”

Best of Both Worlds

Certainly, it’s hard to imagine the Black Seeds hailing from Iceland, where the climate is described as ‘sub-polar oceanic.’
Felix Hallwass, an Honours student, moved to New Zealand from Germany when he was six years old. He identifies strongly with both country and his adopted one. "I see myself as a German Kiwi, as I know my morals and personality are a combination of what my German parents have taught me, as well as what I’ve experienced as part of growing up in New Zealand," he says.

Felix admits that while he considers home to be where his family live, “I’d always call Bremen my hometown, not Nelson. In sport, I’d always support Germany.”

I ask Felix how his cultural identities affect him on a daily basis?

“My parents, sister and I are German citizens, and speak mostly German at home, although it has slowly become an English-German hybrid. Having two distinct cultures to identify with, I’ve been able to decide the aspects or attitudes of each culture that appeal to me, or I agree with,” he says.

“The result of this is an interesting synthesis of ideas that influences how I interact with others, and this has given me a greater appreciation of diversity.”

James Burtin, a second year student of Psychology and Criminology, found himself in New Zealand in 2005. He was born in Graase, France, to an English mother and a French father, and considers himself ‘a big mixture of all the good aspects of each culture.’

His diverse upbringing has influenced him in several respects. “Probably the most important way is that I always try to be friendly to whoever I meet—especially if they’re new to the area, as I know how hard it can be to adjust to new places,” he says.

Felix agrees. “I think my background allows me to empathise well with different people, apart from an identity crisis here and there.”

Fairooz says that her background has made her, ‘curious about the world,’ as well as more tolerant. “I try not to pigeonhole,” she says. “I think that’s because I always expect people to have preconceived notions about me.”

This open-mindedness is a recognized characteristic of ‘third culture kids’ (TCK’s): those who, as children, spent a significant period of time in one or more cultures, and now integrate elements of those into a third culture. TCK’s often experience this ‘identity crisis’ that Fairooz refers to, as they’ve invariably never fully experienced one culture.

Fairooz empathizes with my description of third culture kids. "It’s ticking most of the boxes," she says, “I can definitely identify with the global culture thing. But do I feel complete? Not really, I wouldn't want to socialize with just other TCK's either. Wouldn't they be just as mystified as I am?"

“I don’t feel that I have to be friends with other TCK’s exclusively, or that it’s easier to befriend them,” agrees James. “I just enjoy meeting others, as it fascinates me as to how they’ve adjusted to life in a different culture.” “I think I fit into the third culture category to some extent,” he adds. “I can quite easily go from one clique to another without too much hassle.”

I ask James where he sees himself in ten years time.

"I see myself living in another country," he says. “I yearn for new experiences. I’m not sure where, but I’d enjoy living somewhere different. ‘I will, of course, return to New Zealand, as out of the three places I’ve lived, it’s definitely my favorite.”

Daan concurs. “I’ve got no idea what the future has to offer, but I’ve got a feeling I’ll still be living in Wellington,” he says. “I can’t see me going back to Iceland for good in the near future, but definitely for visits. The weather’s just a lot better here.”

Fairooz is more definite, when I ask her whether she intends to return to Egypt for good. “God no!” she exclaims. “My dad just got back from a month

http://twitter.com/mlle_elle

This article, first appeared in Victoria University’s magazine, Salient"
The Cool-Kawaii: Afro-Japanese Aesthetics and New World Modernity

Example one: "A young black man strolls down the street in Oakland, California’s African American community. He is wearing a Chicago Bulls athletic suit with expensive matching sneakers. The sneakers are untied and he walks with a light limp, leaning just a bit to one side. His arms take turns trailing behind him as he ambles on his way. He knows he is cool and looks good. He follows the popular rap groups and knows all the latest dance steps. Since he lost his job as a stock clerk six months ago, he has been unable to contribute to the support of his two children, who live with his former girlfriend and her mother. Halfway down the block, he runs into a good friend who is similarly dressed. They exchange a variety of low-five and high-five handshakes. Using a combination of Black speech patterns and street terminology, they discuss the latest happenings and exchange ideas about generating some income."

Example two: "Tokyo. A group of extremely high-heeled Japanese girls wobble towards a group of Japanese young men who are sitting at a restaurant table. The girls’ faces are made up with thick layers of cream foundation and powder and all of them wear sparkly things in their hair. As they listen to the men, their outlined mouths are permanently smiling. Their shaded eyes, emerging under heavy fake eyelashes, adopt the shape of golf balls and convey the impression of astonishment as well as the vague feeling that whatever the males are saying will not be fully understood. The perpetual look of embarrassment, an effect of a sophisticated application of rouge, contributes to this impression. While they clap their hands whenever one of the males makes a joke, the few words that the girls occasionally breathe into the conversation come across as squeaky and "cute" sounds modeled on anime voices. Finally, one girl takes out her telephone from which six plush animals dangle and shows off a recently added glittery toy. In unison the other girls scream: kawaii!"

What do these two examples—the one African American cool, the other Japanese cute or kawaii—have in common?

At first sight not much. The one is masculine and preoccupied with the dissimulation of emotion, the other is feminine and engaged in the ostentatious display of sentimentality. Cool produces an aesthetic of the emotionally restrained and the detached while kawaii excels in attachment to creations with resonances in childhood. Cool appears as an aesthetic used by the leader of the gang while kawaii seems to remain the option of women who have decided to become children. In spite of these exterior oppositions, both phenomena have important conceptual structures in common: both act against the plainness of official societies (the blandness of white America and the uniformity of Japan). In a more global context, they are even linked: they combat, both in its own way, the American "uncool" aesthetics and street terminology, they discuss the latest happenings and exchange ideas about generating some income."

Afro-Japanese Aesthetics

Cool and kawaii are expressions set against the oppressive homogenizations that occur within official modern cultures but are also catalysts of modernity. Cool and kawaii do not refer us back to a pre-modern ethnic past. Just like the cool African American man has almost no relationship with traditional African ideas about masculinity, the kawaii shojo is not the personification of the traditional Japanese ideal of the feminine, but signifies an ideological institution of women based on Japanese modernity in the Meiji period, that is, a feminine image based on westernization. At the same time, cool and kawaii do not transport us into a futuristic, impersonal world of hyper-modernity based on assumptions of constant modernization. Cool and kawaii stand for another type of modernity, which is not the technocratic one, but a "Dandyist" one that is closely related to the search for human dignity and liberation.

By Thorsten Botz-Bornstein
Welsh rock band the Manic Street Preachers have traveled a long distance in the years since the release of their first album Generation Terrorists in 1991. They’ve had a myriad of musical styles, huge mid-to-late-90’s popularity, the still unsolved disappearance of songwriter Richey Edwards, acclaim, and some derision along the way. A band committed to their vision, the Manic’s work has had an overt political and philosophical focus which has set them apart from their contemporaries both in Welsh music and the wider British popular scene. The Band’s third album, The Holy Bible, is now widely regarded as one of the best British albums of the 1990’s, is an education in nihilism and alienation.

One recurring influence for the lyrics has been the towering presence of Friedrich Nietzsche. Primary themes in Nietzsche’s work have informed the Manics’ biggest hits, and lesser-known songs. Nietzsche’s thoughts on slave morality, the nature of religious belief in modern society, and self responsibility, have played key roles. Thus the Manics’ music has been invaluable for this student of Nietzsche’s philosophy. Understanding what the great man had to say has been made much easier by listening to the take on him by my favourite band. Let me give just a small selection of lyrics that have helped me understand some key Nietzschean concepts.

‘1985’ AND NIETZSCHE ON RELIGIOUS BELIEF

“So God is Dead, like Nietzsche said, Superstition is all we have left”

‘1985’, a song outlining influences on the band from their mid-80’s formation in the deprived South Wales industrial valleys, gives a memorable line on Nietzsche’s view of the role of God in conventional morality. Our modern morality is still recognizably Christian in ethos; however, the role of God in our moral system has been irrevocably reduced. In Beyond Good and Evil (1886), Nietzsche argued that a ladder of sacrifice in modern religious belief has led to the sacrifice of God for the needs of the modern Protestant work ethic. The time and need for worship has been stripped away to meet the needs of the industrial economy, and so belief in God was superseded by the need to work hard and die. This sacrifice of God for productivity left the Christian moral system anchorless; the morality becomes a series of superstitions with no foundation to give it authority, The Manics show they are aware of this in ‘1985’, a song about a time and place. The 1984-5 miners strike in the South Wales valleys involved industrial action on a scale unseen since 1926. It ended in failure, and the morality of the conflict fell with it. Thus the rootless-ness of this moral system had been exposed.

A questioning of the nature of the morality of the area, and modern morality itself, infuses the song. The Manics recognize what Nietzsche had prophesied: that when the foundations for moral systems are exposed as contingent or even non-existent, then the moral system collapses, leaving the vacuum of nihilism. The communities that spawned the Manics were left in 1985 with only ‘superstition’- a week collection of rules and regulations with no authoritative character. A truly Nietzschean interpretation of the experience of
“Blessed be the blades,
Blessed be the sighs,
Dionysus against the crucified,
Find your truth, and face your truth,
Speak your truth and be with your truth.”

‘Judge Yr’Self’ was originally penned for the soundtrack of the 1995 Sylvester Stallone vehicle Judge Dredd, but did not make it onto the soundtrack—unsurprising, considering the deeply Nietzsche, Dionysian and anti-Christian tones of the lyrics—not the usual fare for Hollywood flotsam.

Nietzsche’s ‘New Philosopher’ was his response to the need to avert what he perceived as the inevitable rise of nihilism in Europe. The ‘New Philosopher,’ as outlined in Thus Spoke Zarathustra and Beyond Good and Evil, is a solitary and self-determined individual, free of the prejudices of past philosophers and their philosophies, and free to act upon his will-to-power to create his own, self-justified philosophy. Nietzsche’s prototype will also reject moral consensus and create their own morality beyond such arbitrary terms as good and evil, through justifying to themselves alone the intentions behind and the consequences of their actions. If there is an essential property to such an individual, they will be Dionysian; a person who affirms the will to live at all times, does not deny life and the experiences it provides, and who rejects the constraints of any moral order to ascertain the truths of life. In ‘Judge Yr’Self’, the Manics exemplify Nietzsche’s ‘New Philosopher’ to a tee—a person who accepts life’s experiences, even the negative, with resilience and willingness, rejecting constraining Christianity and becoming a Dionysian free spirit. The Manics are telling us to take up personal responsibility in an age when responsibility is largely stripped from us as individuals; the state and the authorities will take responsibility for the moral behaviour of individuals much more readily than the people themselves. ‘Judge Yr’Self’ offers up a Nietzschean wake-up call: to transcend the collapsed traditional moral order, individuals must take responsibility for their actions and intentions, not blame others, or appeal to normative assumptions or pragmatic considerations. Do what you will, and live with it—do not look to others. Nietzsche would approve wholeheartedly.

This final line of the Manics’ 2000 number one single, ‘The Masses Against the Classes’ is one of the most clearly Nietzschean expressions in their work.

On one extremely basic level, the song offers a traditional Marxist-
Socialist anthem, its title line evoking class war and the rise of the workers against the bourgeoisie. Nietzsche would treat this interpretation of history with disdain; the masses are subjugated through their choice to accept slave morality, and through their characteristic weakness. The masters exploit because this is what they do. Nietzsche uses the analogy of birds of prey and lambs to illustrate this point in The Genealogy of Morals (1887): it is nonsensical to attach blame to a bird of prey when it kills a lamb—this is what it does! Similarly, the classes exploit because this is what they do, not because of any vindictiveness or meanness.

The song requires much closer analysis, upon which the clear influence of Nietzsche becomes apparent: the Manics are not calling for class war here—they are “tired of giving a reason, when the future is what we believe in.” The message is that there’s a future beyond the narrow parameters of what has been offered in the past, and the Manics are rejecting simplistic boundaries. Thus the song rejects the dichotomy of ‘masses’ and ‘classes’ just as Nietzsche calls for a rejection of other distinctions, such as Beyond Good and Evil: the book is subtitled A Prelude to Philosophy of the future.

The final line of the song is devastating and enlightening; and could be taken directly from The Genealogy of Morals (despite being from Albert Camus). The masses—the ‘herd’ for Nietzsche—began their revolt against the noble morality of their masters by demanding justice for all. However, the true motivation of the herd is resentment of the inherent greater power of the masters. This resentment is finally resolved when the slave revolt is completed and the slaves demand not merely justice, but crowns and ruling status.

The Masses against the Classes’ is the Manics at their most antagonistic; criticizing the very masses who bought their albums and made them popular in the late 90’s for falling for catchy hooks and anthemic tracks instead of understanding the meaning of their work. The band turn from the audience and towards their own thoughts and feelings; away from the herd to their own truth. Audiences increasingly demand ownership of artistic entities, but the song strikes out against this and claims artistic ownership of the music. It’s a damning comment on pop culture—the manics are having an elongated Nietzschean joke at the expense of an audience that does not understand, or does not want to engage with, their philosophy.

In potentionally alienating their audience, the Manics are making a major Nietzsche statement: the herd are unworthy of their work, yet they will buy it anyway, as the essence of the herd is to be unquestioning and following, demanding more of the same. Thus as the band turned away from their formula for success, it’s no surprise that subsequent albums were not well received in the popular press, and did not have the same sales. Nietzsche criticized Wagner for selling out; the Manics pre-empted their selling out by reversing their direction at the peak of their popularity. Contentious but a move Nietzsche would applaud.

Are the Manic Street Preachers the musical embodiment of Nietzsche’s New Philosophers? In a word, no. The ‘New Philosopher’ is a solitary figure and creative force, and while the Manics are clearly creative, they are not solitary in a Nietzschean sense. They are still a very popular band, with a dedicated fan base. This itself does not invalidate them as New Philosophers, as Nietzsche is clear that the New Philosopher must not just create but lead. Yet the band does not just lead; they include and nurture. The rapport with the fans is the issue: the ‘New Philosopher’ must be apart from others, and seek guidance only from himself. To attend a Manic Street Preachers gig is to be intimate with your heroes, not in awe of them from afar. For this fan at least, a live show is a genuinely inclusive affair. This type of inclusiveness is not what Nietzsche would expect from his Übermensch (super-human). However, as purveyors of Nietzschean philosophy to a poor member of the herd, I am forever grateful to the band. They lifted me and thousands of others’ horizons with lyrics that provided a new way of viewing the world beyond the one presented in my upbringing. ‘New Philosophers’? Maybe not. My
Ray Boisvert describes the disdain which many philosophers down the ages have had for food and the other appetites of the body.

Richard Watson was a trailblazer of sorts. In 1985, the Washington University professor published a book which combined dieting tips with ruminations on the big questions of life. The combination was not as far fetched as it seemed. The very word ‘diet’ is derived from a Greek term meaning ‘mode of life.’ Since a proper mode of living involves good nutrition, the word soon took on connotations associated with food.

Watson called his book The Philosopher’s Diet: How to Lose Weight and change the World. If his title played on the original meaning of ‘diet’ his philosophical colleagues would probably not have noticed. For them, food and food practices were alien and unwelcome intrusions into a rarefied atmosphere where people could debate forever on whether a brain in a vat, suitably wired to stimulate sensation, might think that it was actually a complete human being roaming about the world.

Dismissal of food as a proper subject for philosophical inquiry is well rooted in the history of thought. Food, food preparation, and the appetite that drives them have been thought to be too mired in the body to be of any philosophical interest. Plato set the tone in his Phaedo by complaining that food was a distraction from higher things. He went so far as to write another dialogue, the Symposium, which is about a banquet at which no one eats. Plato’s contempt for appetite goes hand in hand, as feminist’s tend to remind us, with another sort of contempt. Not only is food missing in the Symposium, but women are banished as well. There is a central ‘female’ in the dialogue, but she is an imaginary goddess who celebrates escaping the body as the best way to speak of love. Philosophy’s towering early figure [Plato] thus bequeathed a triple exclusion as part of his legacy: love without the body, men without women, and banquets without food.

Popular culture was still echoing Plato in 1951 when John Huston’s film The African Queen was released. Rose Sayer (Katherine Hepburn), disgusted with Charlie Allnut’s (Humphrey Bogart) weakness of the flesh, reproaches him with a philosophically sweeping statement, “Nature, Mr Allnut, is what we were put in this world to rise above.” Such a ‘rise above’ attitude has been prominent in philosophy from the beginning. The denigration of food has been one consequence of this prominence. Aristotle needed no more than a comparison with cooking to dismiss music’s role in education. “If they must learn music, [then] on the same principle they should learn cookery, which is absurd.” Arthur Schopenhauer, although separated by the Greeks by two millennia, echoed two familiar ‘rise above’ themes: banishing food and denigrating females. His essay ‘On Women’ stands out as the great European exemplar of philosophical misogyny. His disdain for food is no less palpable. Aesthetics was an area where Schopenhauer made important and lasting contributions. When he discussed still-life paintings, he couldn’t help dismissive comments about the food/appetite connection. Still-Lifes are fine, he claimed, unless they contain food. Fruit still on the vines was an approved subject. It could then be contemplated by reason for it’s beauty. Depicted as food though, the same fruit would act as a stimulus to the appetite which makes us prisoners of the object-enslaved will.

When it comes to actual eating practices, philosophers hardly fare better. Wittgenstein, his biographer tells us, “did not care what he ate so long as it was always the same.”
Sartre was philosophically annoyed by the body’s regular cry for nutrition. When questioned about his food preferences, he admitted that they were few. He rarely ate vegetables or fruits unless they were mixed into something like pastry. Seafood of all sorts revulsed him, along with tomatoes. Sausages, sauerkraut and chocolate cake were among his favourites. The most striking thing about Sartre’s daily ingestion was the quantity of non-foods with which he contaminated his body: two packs of especially strong cigarettes, interspersed with constant puffing on a pipe, many glasses of wine, beer, distilled alcohol, tea and coffee, alternating with amphetamines and barbiturates. His special enmity for seafood came back to haunt him one day when in mescaline induced state, he imagined himself being stalked by a lobster.

These are minor exceptions in a constant parade of philosophers for whom philosophy means focusing exclusively on mind and leaving stomach in the shadows. The last century, though, may have sown seeds for change. John Dewey, as early as the 1920’s, urged philosophers to pay attention to that dimension of human experience concerned with “direct enjoyment” in “feasting and festivities,” an area sorely lacking the attention “from philosophers that it demands.” His challenge was not answered until the last decades of the century. Watson’s “diet and deep thoughts” book was the first in the U.S. In France, Michael Serres and Michel Onfray have taken reflection on food seriously, Serres in technical and difficult works like Le Parasite (1980) and Les cinq sens (1985), and Onfray in more accessible works like Le ventre des philosophes (1989) and La raison gourmande (1995). Britain’s contribution has been Elizabeth’s Telfer’s Food for Thought, issued in 1966 and the promise from Roger Scruton of a forthcoming philosophical cookbook, “which will take in the nature of food and our relationship to it.” In America, a number of books have followed Watson’s Philosophers Diet. Lisa Heldke and Deane Curtin broke important ground with their anthology Cooking, Eating and Thinking in 1992. Susan Bordo’s Unbearable Weight followed in 1993. Leon Kass brought out The Hungry Soul in 1994. The century closed out with Carolyn Korsmeyer’s Making Sense of Taste, whose subtitle points explicitly to the new area for exploration: Food and Philosophy.

Is this just a fad, or is it a trend which can move philosophical life forward? What impact

An interest in philosophy of culture has led Raymond to reflect on the intersection of food practices and philosophy. He has just completed a manuscript Food Transforms Philosophy. His new project, growing out of research done for the food book, is to explore the virtue of available now from Auckland Library
In the wry 1986 Smiths hit song *Frankly, Mr. Shankly*, singer/lyricist Morrissy warns, “Fame….it can play hideous tricks on the brain”—mind games, that is, where the audience is unwittingly accomplice. For a while the relationship between exhibitionist-celebrity and voyeur-audience is consensual, it is neither particularly healthy nor examined. Composed of an amalgam of complicated motivations, both on the giving and receiving end, affairs between famous persons and their admirers are frequently perverse, and fraught with unrealistic expectations. There is something of a Faustian pact in the lust for celebrity. Forego your privacy and strip down to your soul, the unspoken understanding, goes, and the adulation of the masses shall be yours.

What makes for celebrity? It is an inscrutable brew of ambition, talent, beauty, timing, personal magnetism, pure luck—and not necessarily in that order. Somehow, a personality captures the public imagination, or as is often the case, simply demands it. The public then focuses the object of desire with the heat of its undivided attention, and a star is born. In most cases, the personality being celebrated is desperately grateful for the attention: if not, they find they cannot so easily be rid of it.

The minutiae of the new star’s life soon becomes public domain; their childhood and lovers, hopes and fears, homes and holidays, diets and bodies, all are shamelessly discussed and dissected. ’After all that we’ve done for you, after all that we’ve given you,’ it is implied, ’this is only our fair due.’

As music journalist Chris Heath noted, countering Madonna’s indignation to his gently probing questions: “you can’t open your home up to the public, and charge admission, then act horrified when you find strangers in your bedroom.”

But where do you draw the line? There have always been celebrities, and yet the means to access them have never been quite as sophisticated and invasive, nor the media so pervasive. Ultimately, recklessness of the press or media feeding frenzy is justified and sanctioned by the insatiability of the paying audience. “The unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable,” Wilde quipped of the English gentlemen’s fondness for fox hunting. Uneatable, in the case of celebrities, because it is an illusion that the public so viciously hunts. Or as poet Rilke paradoxically observed, “Fame is the sum total of misunderstandings that gather around a new name.”

The superstar/supermodel then, becomes a sort of (super) human Rorschach of impossible projections and thwarted desires before which we are overcome and swoon. Which is why, given the volatile emotions involved, flirting with celebrity can also be flirting with disaster, as Princess
from these intimate strangers whom we let into our homes and hearts, and whom we hold up to the light and examine from every angle, more engaged with the contours of their bodies and lives than with our own.

Perhaps this is also what is unsavory and dishonest about the culture of celebrity, the displacement of Socrates famous dictum ‘Know thyself’ with ‘know another.’ Namely, the transference of time, energy, curiosity and hard work meant to be directed inwards, that is instead—lazily and cruelly—outwardly directed.

For this reason, a rise in celebrity culture may correlate with a decline in the culture of self-examination.

Transparency, a term currently much-abused in political and business circles, once meant something. For the Greek philosopher Diogenes, living in truth entailed making of the world a vast glass house with transparency of impulses, intentions and conduct. Diogenes lived in a cask or tub, flamboyantly searching with a lantern, in full daylight, for ‘an honest man.’

Something of this nakedness—emotional, spiritual and physical—is expected of our handsomely purchased celebrities. But what is observed alters in response, so that external substitutes for self-knowledge and self-love are invariably doomed to failure.

No wonder then that both

Yahia Lababidi is of Lebanese/Egyptian extraction, born in 1973, and best known for his aphorisms, which have been widely reprinted.

'Trial by Ink' is his first collection of cultural essays which he views as ‘a sort of mental autobiography and a collection of judgements, a catalogue of interests, concerns, possessions, exorcisms and even passing enthusiasms’ written
New Zealand among the worst for inequality between rich and poor, report says

The greater the gap between rich and poor, the more likely people will grow up a drug user, a criminal, less educated, obese, pregnant while a teenager, even less trusting of others.

That is the main thesis of The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better, by British researchers Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, which tracks income inequality against social indicators including health, education and crime.

The topic was the subject of a Victoria University-run forum on inequality last week, which invited academics and Treasury analysts to see whether Professor Wilkinson’s ideas resonated with New Zealand data.

The Spirit Level - praised by left-leaning parties - shows Japan as the most equal country in terms of the gap between the richest 20 per cent and the poorest 20 per cent. The US and Singapore bring up the rear.

New Zealand used to rank among the best in the world in terms of income inequality, but the book ranks it 17th in a list of 23 developed countries; less equal than Italy, Israel and Greece but more equal than Australia and the UK.

Treasury senior analyst Ben Gleisner told the forum that income inequality had risen sharply from the mid-80s to the mid-90s, which coincided with the Rogernomics years of neo-liberal economic policies. The trend has reversed slightly since 2000.

Poverty is the Mother of Crime

He presented several graphs with New Zealand data. As the income gap widened, teenage pregnancy rates, obesity and the imprisonment rate increased. But life expectancy and the rate of secondary school qualifications improved, while the number of homicides dropped (although it spiked last year).

"In some cases there are strong positive relationships, and in some cases it's negative. It's not as universal as Wilkinson's thesis suggests, although we have to be cautious."

A number of factors must be considered when interpreting the results, he said, including:

* The lack of data points for some statistical sets.
* Time lag issues (any effect on life expectancy, for example, could take decades to show up in data).

A cause and effect view, therefore, was difficult to prove, which is one of the criticisms of the book. Others have challenged Professor Wilkinson’s data and the countries he included, and used different countries to show different conclusions.

Professor Wilkinson has defended his thesis. Unexpected results for health data - suggesting, for example, greater inequality leads to longer life expectancy, for example - had to be viewed across countries, rather than within a country.

Public health Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman, from Otago University, showed that NZ’s infant mortality rate before the mid-1980s was comparable to Denmark, but was now almost twice as high as Denmark.

She also presented data on the change in hospitalization rates due to close contact infectious diseases.

"The period when our income inequality started to rise very rapidly ... there’s a strong association with the way this terrible disease [meningococcal disease] took off in New Zealand. It should not occur in a developed country."

Professor Howden-Chapman suggested that the rise was related to families becoming poorer and moving into smaller and more crowded housing.

Forum chair Jonathan Boston, the director of Victoria University’s Institute of Policy Studies, said there was enough evidence to support the general thesis in The Spirit Level.

"My personal view is that we can have some confidence that more equal societies - other things being equal - have better social outcomes across a range of measures. It may not be absolutely conclusive, but I think it’s reasonably persuasive."

Policies tackling unemployment and lifting wages would lead to greater income equality - but that was not easy to achieve. Working For Families had made an impact, not only with assistance but also in bringing sole parents into the workforce.

"To put in place the sorts of policy measures that were likely over time to reduce inequality, one would need a very strong political consensus that was desirable," he said.

"At the moment there is no such consensus."

Mr Gleisner said the overall picture was not as clear as the book suggests. His data used household income, but different income definitions - individual income or final income (taking government services into account) - yielded different results.

Equality issues are also complicated; two households on the same income are not as equally wealthy if, for example, one has more occupants than the other.

He did not say that Professor Wilkinson had cherry-picked his data, but rather that more data was needed to have more robust results.

Mr Gleisner said he would like to see more work on wealth inequality, which includes assets and financial liability.

"We talk a lot about income inequality, but its wealth inequality that's the main issue. Half of the population doesn't have any wealth."

"For income, the top decile (top 10 per cent of income earners) has 25 per cent of the total income, but the top decile (for wealth) has about half of the wealth, and the next has a third."

"One of the issues I'd like to see more work on is persistent income deprivation, the people stuck at the bottom and can't move."

http://derekcheng.wordpress.com/

Social Problems linked to wealth gap: study

How Equal?

The Best

Japan

Finland

Norway

Sweden

Denmark

The Worst

U.K

Australia

New Zealand

Portugal

USA

Singapore

Source; UN Development Programme

This article first appeared in the NZ Herald on November 22 2010.

Quote By Joseph Reich;
"Existence eventually becomes who can cope and adapt the best with the emptiness"

http://www.madswirl.com/content/poetry/Joseph_Reich