Sex, food and the pursuit of happiness
(with apologies to John Locke)

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Sex and Food
Furtive, guilty behaviour
Do we control our own happiness?

Employment, education, money \cong 15\% \text{ subjective well-being}

(Michalos & Diener, 2007)
Self-actualization

Esteem

Love/Belonging

Safety

Physiological

- morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts
- self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others
- friendship, family, sexual intimacy
- security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of the family, of health, of property
- breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion
Self actualizers

- embrace reality and facts rather than denying truth.
- are spontaneous.
- are 'focussed on problems outside themselves'.
- 'can accept their own human nature in the stoic style, with all its shortcomings'
- are similarly acceptant of others
- generally lack prejudice.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

1. Biological and Physiological needs
   - Basic life needs – air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.

2. Safety needs
   - Protection, security, order, law, limits, stability, etc.

3. Belongingness and Love needs
   - Family, affection, relationships, work group, etc.

4. Esteem Needs
   - Achievement, status, responsibility, reputation

5. Cognitive needs
   - Knowledge, meaning, self-awareness

6. Aesthetic needs
   - Beauty, balance, form etc.

7. Self-actualisation
   - Personal growth, self-fulfilment

8. Transcendence
   - Helping others to self-actualise

Each level represents a different level of needs, with lower levels being more basic and higher levels being more advanced.
What makes us happy

Beauty?
What makes us happy
What makes us happy
What makes us happy

Intelligence

Education
What makes us happy

Religion
What makes us happy

Narcissism
What makes us happy

Sense of humour
What makes us happy

Free time
What makes us happy
What makes us happy

Social conscience (Volunteering)
Measuring happiness

- Satisfaction With Life Scale
- Affect Balance Scale
- Experience Sampling Method
- Day Reconstruction Method
- The Subjective Happiness Scale
How happy are we?

Diener – 916 surveys of 1.1 million people in 45 nations
Who is happy?

Age
Gender
Race
Traits
Work and leisure
Relationships
Faith
Wealth

1995 GNP per capita, in thousands (purchasing power parity estimates)
Economic models of happiness

\[ r = h(u(y, s, z, t)) + e \] (1)

where \( r \) is some subjective measure of happiness.
\( u \) is true wellbeing or utility
\( h \) is a function relating actual to reported well-being
\( y \) is real income
\( s \) is sexual activity
\( z \) is a set of demographic and personal characteristics
\( t \) is the time period
\( e \) is an error term.
Addiction models

"Hello, my name is Roberto, and I will be your enabler this evening."
Unhealthy relationships with food
Dopamine and the fickle female vole.
Brain chemistry

- Phenylethylamine
- Dopamine
- Oxytocin
How pleasure is coded in the brain.

The cortical localization of pleasure coding might reach an apex in various regions of the orbitofrontal cortex, which differentiate subjective pleasantness from other processing for aspects of the same stimulus, such as a pleasant food.
Universality of response to liked or disliked stimuli
What is beautiful or pleasing?
An intellectual is a person who's found one thing that's more interesting than sex.

~Aldous Huxley