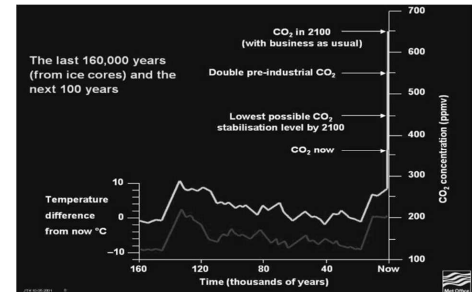


Sustainability

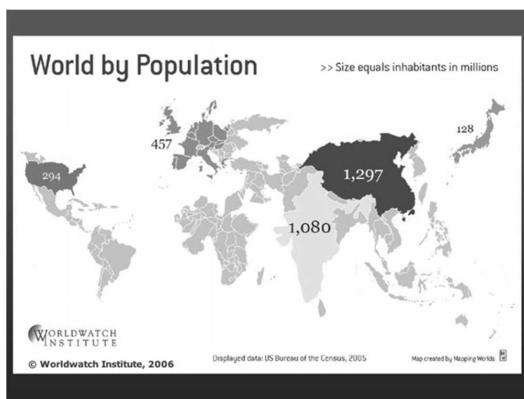
Can Psychology Help Save the Planet?

A. Defining Sustainability

- Long-term stability; not burning own house
- Living within means – one planet



Need to Think Ahead



Need to Think Systemically

- How do we decrease GW gases?
 1. How does consumption produce GW?
 2. Individual vs. systemic perspective
- Key questions...
 1. What drives consumption?
 2. What makes us happy? What's the good life?
 3. Can we imagine attractive alternatives?

B. The Psychology of Consumption

1. Science of Desire

- Consumer Psychology
- Consumers targets of powerful, sophisticated companies
- Advertising & marketing experts
- E.g., nagging strategies for children
- E.g., strategies for selling ipods
- ?: What works on you?

2. Seeing Moral Sources

- Societal/Personal Ideals or Motivations defining what is good – what to seek
 1. [Review Systems Thinking Perspective]
 2. Inside/outside individual
 3. Socially/individually constructed
- Modernity introduces new sources
 - Disengaged reasoning
 - Utilitarian individualism
 - Expressive individualism

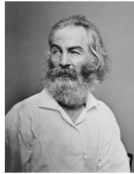
A. Utilitarian Individualism

- Maximize utility
 1. efficiency and effectiveness
- Maximize satisfaction
- Take control, devise solution, control nature
 1. E.g., Artificial fertilizer, free market, technology, “quality of life” = dishwasher
- American Dream: success/self-made person
- Stereotype: Think business major/ engineer



B. Expressive Individualism

- Authenticity, uniqueness, self-fulfillment
- Reveal/develop true self
 1. Stereotype: Artist with good taste, likes beautiful, unique things; style
- Narrating/defining identity through stuff
 1. Symbolic meaning (wedding dress/ring, Plasma TV)
 2. Social dialog through stuff (bling, jock, business casual)
 3. E.g., music, clothes, hair, furniture house that expresses (and makes you) who you are.



C. Positional Success

- Striving for respect, status, winning
- Evolutionary basis in sex.competition
 1. Men strive for dominance
 2. Women attracted to dominant men (resources)
- Examples
 1. want nice house in “nice” neighborhood (Queens Rd.)
 2. attracted to labels for “quality”
 3. type of car, clothes, vacations

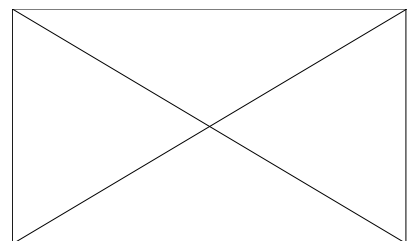


3. Other motivations

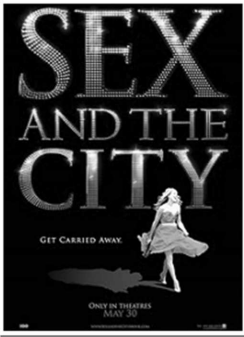
1. Shopping therapy/coping
2. Shopping to relieve boredom, to “do something”

What moral sources at work?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMz3jatsanE>



What moral sources at work?



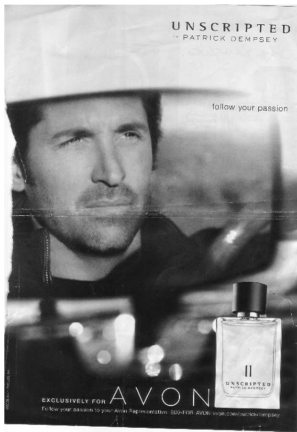
Fergie - "Labels or Love" Lyrics

Shopping for labels, shopping for love
 Manolo and Louis, it's all I'm thinking of
 Shopping for labels, shopping for love
 Manolo and Louis, it's all I'm thinking of
 I already know what my addiction is
 I be looking for labels, I ain't looking for love

What moral sources at work?

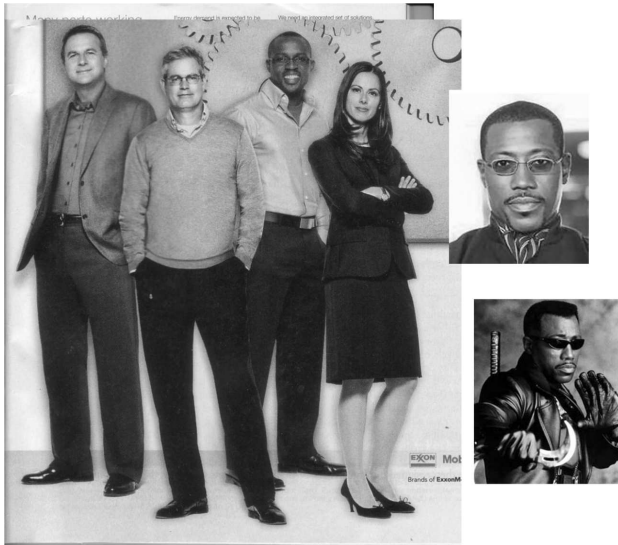


What moral sources at work?



What moral sources at work?

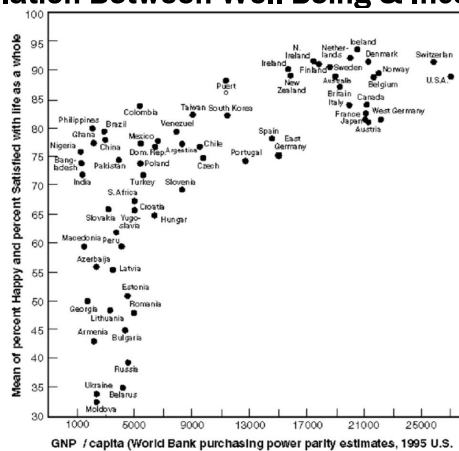




4. Downsides

- Of Modernity & Consumption
 1. Depression increase
 2. Erosion of community
- Happiness limited
 1. Money/consuming only does so much

Relation Between Well-Being & Income



D. Infrastructures of Consumption

- Structures, forces, systems shaping behavior
- Forces the pre-choose for you
- Or make better choices more difficult
- (Note: must see through “agent” delusion)

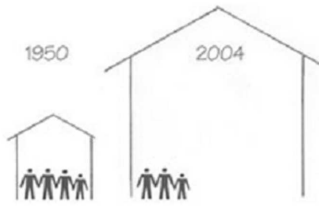
1. Domains of infrastructures

1. Land Use – sprawl
2. Housing (tax write-off)
3. Transportation
 - Public/Private; Pedestrian/Cyclist vs. Motorist
4. Energy (subsidies, lack of conservation effort)
5. Cheap waste disposal
6. Agriculture Subsidies
 - Commodities subsidized; High/fat sugar
7. TV
 1. Kills social involvement, deskills
 2. Markets products, breeds materialism

What dictates behavior?



Change in Housing

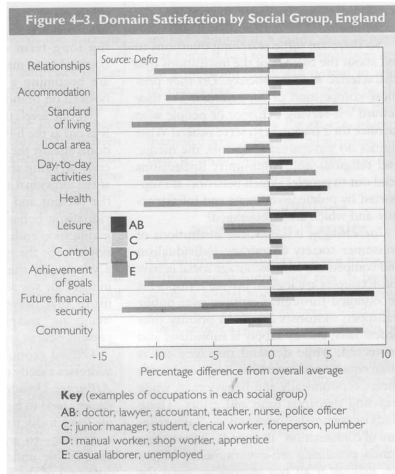


In 1950 the average American family consisted of 3.6 people sharing a 1,000-square-foot house. By 2004, the average household consisted of 2.7 people sharing a 2,400 square foot house. That's an increase of 240% in house size in just over half a century, while family size shrank by about 30%.

2. Challenge of Affluence – Avner Offer

- Individual choices typically myopic
 1. Government maligned (“free market” knows best)
 2. Ever expanding market (and marketing)
 3. Curtail evolutionary appetites
- Solution is social – commitment devices
- Erode commitment devices e.g., Community
- Rosetto Phenomenon:
 1. ½ heart attacks as neighboring town, same Italian village, social contact stimulates immune system, resist disease and stress

- Rich report greater well being
- Except for community



3. Alternatives

- Example #1: Bogota Bike/Bus System
 1. Identify key infrastructure components
- Congestion problem
- Proposed solution
- Mayor’s solution
- Guiding principle
- Possible in America?



Sustainable Infrastructures

- Example: Bogota Bike/Bus System
 1. Identify key infrastructure components



What are the incentives?



What activity gets the resources?



What activity gets the resources?



How must other systems adapt?



What Psychological Interventions are needed?



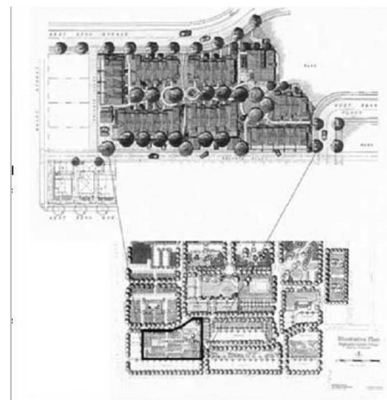
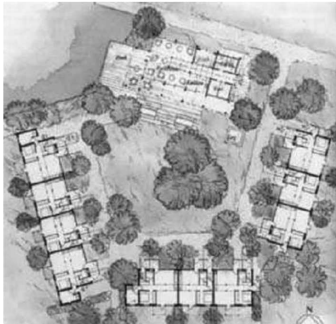
What corollary institutions are needed?



Still work to do



Alternative Example #2: Cohousing



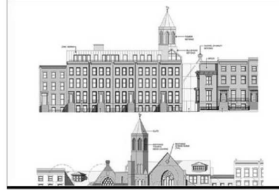
A Village Down the Block



FROM-SCRATCH COMMUNITY Alex Marshall strolls through a former church property that he and other members of a group called Brooklyn Cohousing hope will one day be the site of an urban village.
By SHANE S. TAYLOR

Weird Beneficiary of the Credit Crunch: Hippie Idea of Cohousing

Monday, December 3, 2008, by Robert



We thought about writing the concept of cohousing oh so many times, but it's so complicated and hard to explain in a way that won't put people to sleep, that we've steered clear of it. LHM now. The Times tackled the topic this weekend and came up with the killer angle: because of the credit crunch, developers would rather sell a project to a group of people following a super-progressive, egalitarian housing concept that comes from Denmark in the 1960s. If that doesn't say something about the Brooklyn development market we don't know what does. The short version of co-housing is that it's a place where people pool resources to build a project that is "a place where neighbors sit down to share meals several times a week, where children roam freely from home to home, and where grown-ups can hang out in a communal living room." (All the details are on this great article.) It's a "village within a single development" and the site the group has come upon in a failed project called Carlton Mews in Fort Greene.



E. Collective/Government Action

1. Politics for Infrastructure of Sustainability
 - Public Transportation; City Density
 - Check out The 350 Movement
2. Supportive fiscal framework
 - Carbon & Gas Tax
3. Energy industry regulation
 - Light bulbs, tax rebates for fuel efficiency
4. Improving norms/expectations
 1. Wage policies
 2. Advertising regulations

