

Finding job satisfaction

“We’re embedded in a career obsessed culture”

Usually I would start by saying something like: “Finding a job isn’t the problem getting it is.”

In the same way that finding a beautiful girl at bar isn’t the challenge, it’s getting her home. But these days I’m not so sure, there are quite literally less jobs now than there were a year ago. So the challenge is in the search *and* in the close.

I’m at the age now where most of my friends are working the daily grind, Monday to Friday, January to December, 2009 until they die. They’re not too damn happy about it. The best thing about their week is Friday. The best part of their year is a holiday. So why the rush to get a job?

Are we all just giving in to compromise? Quitting the band and getting a desk job. Are we giving up our dream and coming to terms with reality? Or are we caving into generations of social pressure telling us how we should live?

We’re embedded in a career obsessed culture, we’re not offered another path. Civilization needs a sustainable supply of labour, capitalism needs a bottomless pool of buyers. So we’re taught to work to earn and earn to buy. If we work enough, earn enough we can be ‘successful’. If I can’t have my daily iced venti double caramel macchiato I will never be happy.

What’s the real reason why most people never end up doing what they wanted to do as a kid? I bet you’re not even studying the course you *really* want to do.

What should I do after I get a job? Find a gal and settle down, patent my very own personal picket fence? Get a mortgage. Have kids. Monitor my superannuation. Pressure my kids to go to university. Suggest my son finds a gal and settles down, help him build a white picket fence. Then retire and take a road trip to Moe?

People think they’re escaping stereotypes

and social conformity but they’re not they simply move from one into another. Women used to be expected to forsake their career to raise children now they’re expected to forsake their children to raise their career. The Hills hoist in the backyard is gathering rust but it doesn’t matter because someone else does your washing anyway right?

But that’s just crazy talk, the naivety of youth masquerading as wisdom in the prose of rebellion. Everyone has to work, if people stopped working the world would grind to a halt, whole economies would collapse, oh wait that’s already happened. If you don’t take out the trash the kitchen will stink. If you leave your food in the tent a bear will rip you apart in your sleep.

I’m not advocating a wholesale abandonment of labour but do you ever stop and wonder why you want the things you do? And how much of that wanting you can really claim as your own?

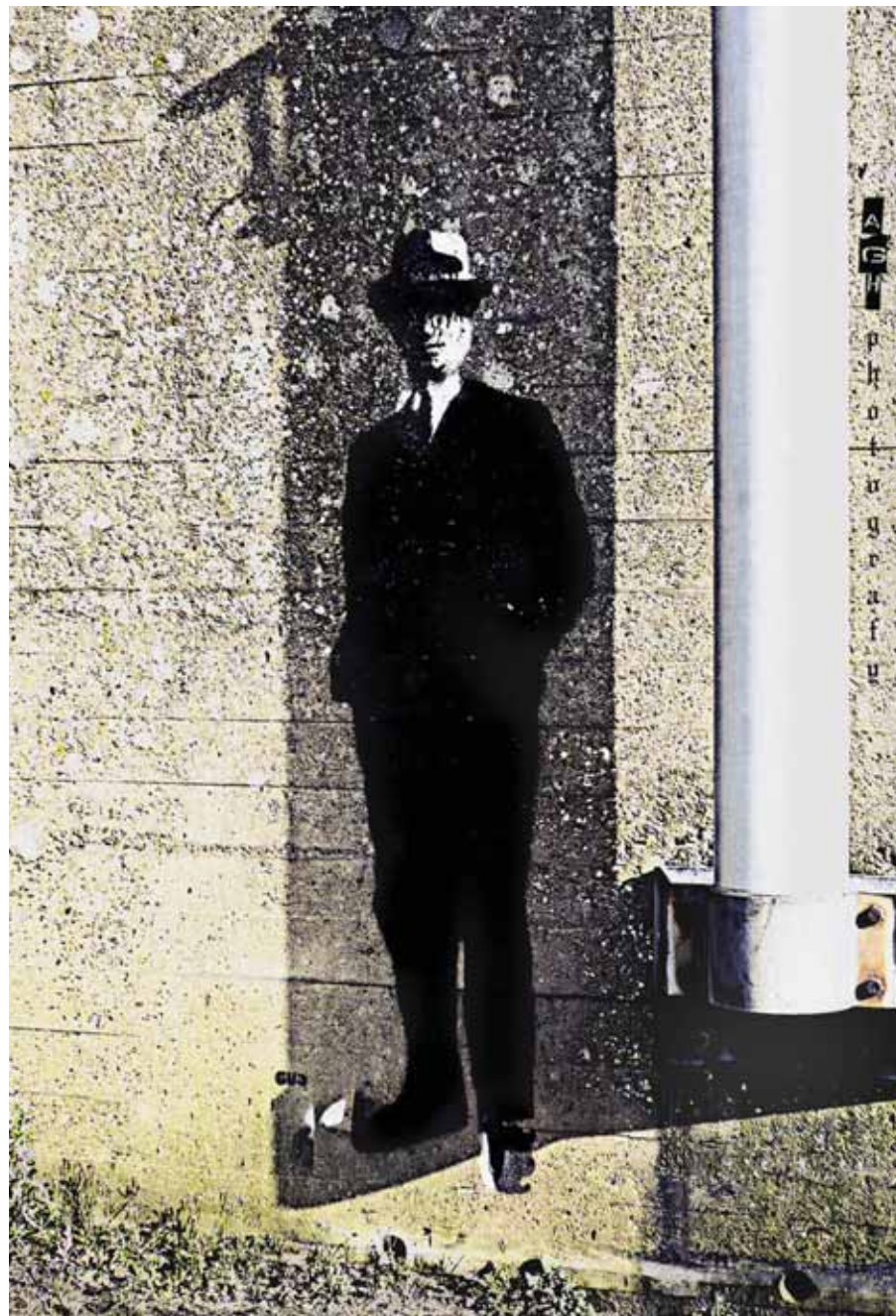
I hope I always have the freedom to decide what I value in life and the freedom to choose which passions to pursue and which to leave behind. All of which is easier said than done.

Just make sure, that when you’re stressing about landing that dream job, (you know the one that you have been working towards all your life) that it truly is your dream and not someone else’s. That you value it for the worth you find in it not because you found it in a brochure with a nice price tag.

I know. What would your parents say? Who cares. Ultimately any regrets you have will be yours alone to keep, they’re not going to be around to shoulder that burden. Besides, sometimes I think the truth is that they’re just as clueless as we are. Regurgitating the same rhetoric, the same patchwork system of values. Someone else’s idea of success.

I’m moving to Ireland. 

Tom Cummins



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