Tekst 3

(Can't Get No) Satisfaction
The new science of happiness needs some historical perspective

By Michael Shermer

Imagine you have a choice between earning $50,000 a year while other people make $25,000, or earning $100,000 a year while other people get $250,000. Prices of goods and services are the same. Which would you prefer? __9__, studies show that the majority of people select the first option.

5 This seemingly illogical preference is just one of the puzzles that science is trying to solve about why happiness can be so remarkably elusive in today's world. Several researchers have addressed the topic, but I found a historian's long-view analysis to be ultimately the most enlightening.

London School of Economics economist Richard Layard says that we are no
10 happier even though average incomes have more than doubled since 1950 and "we have more food, more clothes, more cars, bigger houses, more central heating, more foreign holidays, a shorter working week, nicer work and, above all, better health." Once average annual income is above $20,000 a head, higher pay brings no greater happiness. Why? One, our genes account for roughly half
15 of our predisposition to be happy or unhappy, and two, our desires are relative to what other people have, not to some absolute standard.

Happiness is better equated with satisfaction than pleasure, says Emory University psychiatrist Gregory Berns, because the pursuit of pleasure lands us on a never-ending treadmill that paradoxically leads to misery. "Satisfaction is
20 an emotion that captures the uniquely human need to give meaning to one's activities," Berns concludes. "While you might find pleasure by coincidence — winning the lottery, possessing the genes for a sunny temperament, or having the luck not to live in poverty — satisfaction can arise only by the conscious decision to do something. And this makes all the difference in the world,
25 because it is only your own actions for which you may take responsibility and credit."

Harvard psychologist Daniel Gilbert goes deeper into our psyches when he claims: "The human being is the only animal that thinks about the future." Much of our happiness depends on projecting what *will* make us happy (instead of
30 what actually does), and Gilbert shows that we are not very good at this forethought. Most of us imagine that variety is the spice of life, for example. __13__ in an experiment in which subjects anticipated that they would prefer an assortment of snacks, when it actually came to eating the snacks week after week, subjects in the no-variety group said that they were more satisfied than
35 the subjects in the variety group. "Wonderful things are especially wonderful the first time they happen," Gilbert explains, "but their wonderfulness diminishes with repetition."

This getting accustomed to even lots of wonderfulness is what economists call "declining marginal utility" and married couples call life. But if you think that a
40 wide range of sexual partners adds to the spice of life, you are mistaken: according to an exhaustive study published in *The Social Organization of Sexuality* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), married people have a more satisfying sex life than singles. Historian Jennifer Michael Hecht emphasizes this point in *The Happiness Myth* (Harper, 2007). Her deep and thoughtful historical
45 perspective demonstrates just how time and culture-dependent all this happiness research is. As she writes, "The basic modern assumptions about how to be happy are nonsense." Take lovemaking. "A century ago, an average man who had not had a partner in years might have felt proud of his health and patient self-control, and a woman might have praised herself for the health and
50 happiness benefits of years of abstinence."

Most happiness research is based on self-reported data, and Hecht's point is that people a century ago would most likely have answered questions on a happiness survey very differently than they do today. To understand happiness, we need both history and science.

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1p **9** Which of the following fits the gap in line 3?
- **A** Fortunately
- **B** Irritatingly
- **C** Surprisingly
- **D** Understandably

"the majority of people select the first option" (regel 4)

1p **10** Geeft de tekst een verklaring hiervoor? Zo nee, antwoord "Nee". Zo ja, citeer de eerste twee en de laatste twee woorden van het zinsgedeelte waaruit de verklaring blijkt.

1p **11** Which of the following explains why the author uses the word 'remarkably' in "happiness can be so (remarkably) elusive in today's world" (lines 6-7)?
- **A** "Prices of ... the same." (line 3)
- **B** "average incomes ... better health" (lines 10-13)
- **C** "the pursuit ... to misery" (lines 18-19)
- **D** "it is ... and credit" (lines 25-26)
- **E** "Much of ... this forethought." (lines 28-31)

1p **12** Which of the following becomes clear from lines 17-26?
According to Gregory Berns,
- **A** people's genetic make-up is ultimately decisive in whether they will become happy or not.
- **B** people will feel more fulfilled by achieving something by their own efforts than by sheer luck.
- **C** people will only be able to value true happiness if they have lived through hardship.
- **D** people with high expectations are bound to experience disappointment.

1p **13** Which of the following fits the gap in line 32?
- **A** And
- **B** But
- **C** For

1p **14** Which of the following summarises Daniel Gilbert's main conclusion in lines 27-37?
- **A** People constantly need new challenges and sensations in order to stay happy.
- **B** People dislike having to make predictions about what might make them happy.
- **C** People's ideas about what might contribute to their happiness are often mistaken.
- **D** People's psychological characteristics prevent them from ever achieving real happiness.

1p **15** Wat maakt het voorbeeld dat over "lovemaking" (regel 47) wordt gegeven duidelijk over de uitkomsten van onderzoek naar geluk?
Citeer uit de regels 38-47 de eerste twee woorden van de zin die, of het zinsdeel dat, aangeeft wat duidelijk gemaakt wordt.

1p **16** Whose conclusions does the writer of this article appreciate most?
Those of
  A Richard Layard.
  B Gregory Berns.
  C Daniel Gilbert.
  D Jennifer Michael Hecht.