



Perfect Commodity: #HAPPY(-Meal) - Allie turns 1!

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As global news feeds are increasingly dominated by gruesome imagery of Gaza bombings and more recently, ISIS violence in Iraq, it seems difficult to grasp that a mere global nano-second earlier we were all - or so it seemed - sharing videos of being #HAPPY. Indeed, that [one of these videos](#), also discussed in Allegra, was about 'Happy Gaza' seems almost too painful to recall.

However, perhaps this is PRECISELY the moment to recall these videos - and simultaneously, hopefully, gain some greater understanding of what they were/are all about. You may wonder why we obsess at this point, having returned to it time after time, in post after post. At the present moment we are drawn to memory lane because Allegra's very first BIRTHDAY is fast approaching, and we



find ourselves looking back at everything that this exciting year has brought with it. Even if we seem collectively to have grown tired of #HAPPY by now, it was undoubtedly 'the' social media thing of Spring 2014, and thus for us it remains one of the first phenomenon of this sort that we ended up covering via our joyous social media experiment.

Perhaps our infatuation can also, at least partially, be explained by our insistent infatuation with the global human rights phenomenon, an equally cryptic source of inexplicable 'pull' no matter how futile new UN human rights resolutions and the like are proven to be.

But if not 'reality' in any literal meaning, what then could be identified as the source responsible for generating this 'pull'? And is the existence of this 'something' fundamentally, after everything, a thing to rejoice in the world? Do these videos simply remind us of the positive that, despite everything, exists in all of us? Is their 'pull factor' their capacity to offer reassurance and inspiration in dark times - to confirm our belief that despite it all, we do possess the capacity to one day live together in peace and harmony?



I find myself asking, sincerely: could it be that instead of endless international Conventions, Committees, Resolutions and new Tribunals, at the end of the day the world would simply be improved more with such sincere (seeming?) performances of solidarity, intimacy and - happiness?



I just cannot make up my mind. For there remains always the other side too, a particularly potent one in the case of #HAPPY. By now I have persuasive proof that the innocent-sounding little tune penned by Will Pherrel and his back-up team may, in fact, embody THE perfect commodity!

(Somehow here it feels relevant to mention that Pherrel himself, soon after [tearing up at Oprah while watching global #HAPPY](#), allegedly performed the song in a private concert for Walmart executives – a corporation so tarnished by reports on its abusive employment policies as to make it resistant to the most potent low-budget stain remover)!



The evidence for my conclusion? It arrives via the following tale: Two young children in a Nordic country – let's call it Finland – who speak no English and have no regular access to popular music hear the #HAPPY tune for the very first time as the song is played on the background of a play that their friends participate in.

The kids – being totally oblivious to the song's enormous popularity and having NO idea of the existence of any such thing as #HAPPY-videos – take an instant liking to the tune, from thereon insisting that it be played at all outings involving the family car. Consequently the #HAPPY song is elevated into the semi-official theme song for Summer 2015 for the family in question.

However, as the kids request for the song – not knowing its full title but (regrettably) being familiar with another 'perfect commodity' – they confuse its



name. Thus they without failure always ask, in Finnish: Can we listen to the HAPPY-MEAL song!

I rest my case.



Miia Halme-Tuomisaari has written [two](#) previous [#HAPPY](#) posts , and is by now relatively convinced that the #HAPPY song is out to get her. How else could you explain the fact that she was exposed to a Cello variation of the tune at the inaugural celebrations of #EASA2014! That this event was participated in by 1200 of her closest colleagues in no way diminishes her conviction. She continually quite likes the song, though, having [this one](#) as her favourite variation of all (just trust me)!

Allegra's other #HAPPY posts are '[To Be Happy Muslim or Not](#)' by Raana Bokhari and '[Rhetoric, Resistance and the public Sphere](#)' by Chris Dimning