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B Soc Sci (Hons) QUT

Thesis Title:

The Quest for Authenticity in the West: Negotiating the Self in Late Modern Cultures

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Citation:

Across Western culture, a growing discontent amongst groups in mainstream consumer-driven lifestyles has led to dramatic lifestyle transformations. In this thesis, two related social movements - Seachange and Downshifting - are examined. The results suggest that individuals involved in these social movements are seeking authenticity not only in their environment and relationships, but also within themselves. At the broader level, we can see this ‘quest’ for the authentic across many other areas of our social lives. The twin phenomena analysed here are reflective of deeper cultural motivations to find those objects, relationships, environments and occupations which are congruent not only with internal value and belief systems but also with broader social ones.