Monday, January 23, 12

Group 7 = B (meet 5-6pm)

Brett Murphy

* Give writing assignment:

Write a dream review for your thesis/product. Over-the-top positive in Wired, The New Yorker, on Boing Boing! wherever you would most like the publicity. Have fun with it…compliment yourself….but remember, you also have to say what IT is and what it’s GOOD for, why did the maker make it.! Focus on the adjectives you use to describe the project.

Our guest tonight on the Daily Show is Christina Arnold, successful social entrepreneur and cult survivor. She has distilled 20 years of life in the cult into a series of astounding, terrifying and heartbreaking short videos, available at survivingthecult.com

These phenomenal videos are modeled after Dan Savage’s brilliant project for LGBTQ youth:  <http://www.itgetsbetter.org/>

Thousands of second-generation cult victims have left or escaped to find themselves in utterly unfamiliar territory – not at all prepared for the simplest functions of life on “the outside”. With no bearings, no education, usable work experience or worldliness, they have become lost to a world of drugs, prostitution and crime while homeless or living on welfare. These videos are intended to bear witness to all their experiences in and outside the cult - to validate their struggles. The project also aims to educate the public about this sinister cult originally called The Children of God (CoG), and the deliberate way they raised their children to be destined for failure as adults.

The project is the result of Christina Arnold’s decade long struggle to beat the odds, avoid the common pitfalls of her peers, gain an education and become a productive member of society while caring for her now teenager daughter. She is convinced that talking about her own struggles and decision making processes will help those who have left or are just leaving the cult, and need guidance. The message these videos send is: It will get better for them, too. They have a guide they can trusts to follow and reach their full potential in the at first scary society into which they have plunged. Christina is a hero who feels a strong sense of responsibility as one of the firstborn children in the sinister cult to expose it and to help others to succeed in surviving and thriving on the outside –knowing that there are others like them whom they can lean on for support. For more information about Christina Arnold's experience in the cult and her project, take a look at this months New Yorker article.