Art, Ads, and Facial Coding with Dan Hill
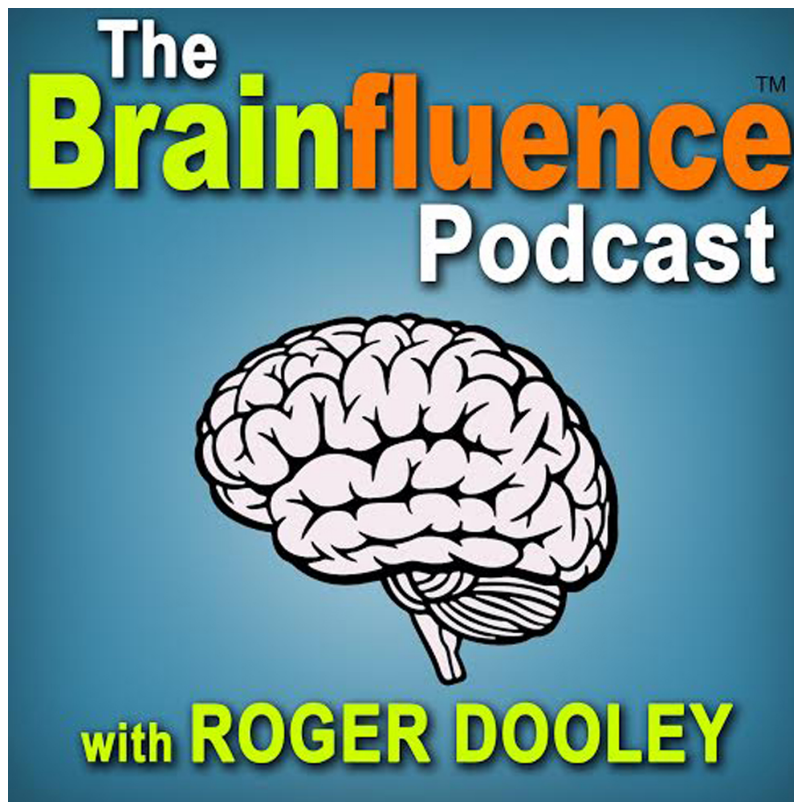
Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley

Art, Ads, and Facial Coding with Dan Hill

Welcome to Brainfluence, where author and international keynote speaker Roger Dooley has weekly conversations with thought leaders and world class experts. Every episode shows you how to improve your business with advice based on science or data.

Roger's new book, *Friction,* is published by McGraw Hill and is now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and bookstores everywhere. Dr Robert Cialdini described the book as, "Blinding insight," and Nobel winner Dr. Richard Claimer said, "Reading Friction will arm any manager with a mental can of WD40."

To learn more, go to RogerDooley.com/Friction, or just visit the book seller of your choice.

Now, here's Roger.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to Brainfluence, I'm Roger Dooley. Here's a question for you, what happens when an expert in neuromarketing and consumer neuroscience looks at art? Not advertising imagery, but actual art, the kind you find in a museum or art gallery. I'll tell you, we're going to answer that question for you.

    Dan Hill's an authority on the role of emotions in business, politics, sports, and popular culture. He's the founder and president of Sensory Logic, Inc., one of the earliest firms to use facial coding to scientifically capture and quantify emotions in business. Dan holds seven U.S. patents related to facial coding and is also a certified facial action coding system, FACS, practitioner. Dan's the author of five books, including Emotionomics. That book is now in over a dozen languages and was named by Advertising Age as one of the Top 10 Must Read Books of 2009.

The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley
http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast

Art, Ads, and Facial Coding with Dan Hill

Dan's new book is First Blush: People's Intuitive Reactions to Famous Art.

Welcome to the show, Dan.

Dan Hill: Thank you so much, Roger.

Roger Dooley: I think that many of our listeners are probably familiar with facial coding, but let's talk a little bit about that first. Can you give your elevator pitch description of what facial coding is and does?

Dan Hill: Sure. The original facial coder was none other than Leonardo da Vinci. He got fascinated with anatomy of the face, that's why the Mona Lisa is such a great painting, and he came to realize that the 25 square inches that involve your eyes and nose and mouth is the richest visual territory on the planet. Facial coding is codified by Dr. Paul Ekman, involves 23 different expressions on the face that correspond to seven emotions. That's happiness, surprise, anger, sadness, fear, disgust, and contempt.

Roger Dooley: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Paul Ekman's original work was done decades ago, how is our understanding of that changed over those years?

Dan Hill: Ekman continued to publish, so the original spade work was started in the 1960s, but he's continued to update his system over time. He's one of the top 20 psychologists in the world, if you look at the rankings.

Roger Dooley: How are those rankings created? Is that by citations or how do you get to be a top 20 psychologist?

Dan Hill: I'm not part of the committee, but I believe it is indeed based on citations, references, probably publications, probably the school you're at, all of those factors would matter to the committee, whoever made that decision. I think the key thing is Paul is a psychologist. When I came to him in 1998 to learn facial coding, I was really being applied essentially in individual psychiatry sessions and he'd done some work on national defense. I'm the one who brought it into the business space, but Paul didn't have a scoring system, he didn't have norms, and he really, frankly, just didn't have an interest in business and marketing as I do and as you do. I really had to refine it and develop it over time.

For instance, it's really important to know how much people are emotionally engaged when they're emoting and not emoting, the timing of it is really important. Now we're on a process which we will continue to evolve where it was automated by somewhat smaller firms who have plugged into the market research space, but Silicon Valley has followed on, and there's also a $2 billion Chinese company that's in this space. As it ties into AI, facial coding, which I think a lot of people know, particularly listeners here, it's going to be a really big factor in society going forward.

Roger Dooley: Is the work that you do done by humans or automation, or do you use both?

Dan Hill: I didn't choose to go the automation route, I'm not a coder. That's fine, you can get more quality through the manual coding still up to this point because of issues of everything from shadows, to the angle of the camera, to frankly, the risk of over-reporting at times. I try to focus on

certainly the micro expressions when they make sense, but also the larger expressions. Software keeps getting better. For instance, there's a somewhat notorious study where someone put a plastic doll in front of a webcam and had it watch a TV commercial, and the software reported a whole bunch of supposedly emotional reactions. I don't know whether the lights were flickering in the room, what would cause the software to suggest that there was emotions happening from the doll. But it does point to research that I've seen and we've done studies for firms, and we really haven't found a software yet that's as accurate as a qualified human coder, which will be over 95%.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. That's pretty scary about the doll because one time I did one of these automated recognition things and watched a funny cartoon. I think from the charts that produced, I might have well been deceased. I don't apparently emote very much when I watch content, at least that particular content. It wasn't uproariously funny, but if I'm sitting there by myself, I don't think I really get very emotional. That's amusing about the doll. That kind of echoes, there was an FMRI study, way back when, when they put a dead fish in an FMRI machine and found it was apparently reacting to things.

Dan Hill: I'm not trying to be a Luddite or something, I believe in the role of technology and it will get better. But so far face recognition, who you are, is simply further along that emotion recognition as to how you are feeling in the moment. This will continue to progress and get better. I would say another problem they have that I've read about repeatedly is the database tends to be white guys like myself, so it does not do as well with people with dark

skin, for instance. Even as a human coder, you need to really work through that. Lighting can really be an issue if you have darker skin people.

There are issues that they are very much aware of and they're going to get better, but I want to be careful not to cast it as it's not going to work or that I'm anti-technology. Simply that I'm more of an artisan, I can do a better job still manually. I work on not trying to do sets of tens of thousands of people. I do something that's a little more particular and in market research terms would be what's called qualitative research.

Roger Dooley: Right. Expand on that a little bit, what does a typical study look like? Whether it's an ad or whether, we're going to talk about viewing art as well. How many subjects are practical, and what would a minimum number of subjects be, and do you do the scoring in real time, or do you do a slow motion playback? How does that work?

Dan Hill: Sure. The size of the project, of course, depends on the budget. We do get asked to do things that are regrettably as little as 12 to 15 people, and you do the best you can on that basis if that's what they've budgeted for. It's really more desirable to do 25 to 50 subjects, that gives you a decent feel for how they might be responding to a TV ad, a storyboard, print ad, landing page, usability experience. There's so many places, really that are just two currencies in the world, as far as I'm concerned as an American, which is dollars and emotions. I've been devoted to seeing how the two can intersect and multiply accordingly.

Roger Dooley: Do you combine what you do with eye tracking to see what people are looking at?

Dan Hill: Yeah. One of my patents is in fact, an additional one to the ones you mentioned, is a patent linking eye tracking and facial coding. Because I'm visually trained as a former art history minor in college, and my wife's a painter and photographer, my mom was an interior designer, that's really been part of my orientation all along, is to be both emotionally literate and visually literate because that's what you need in marketing to be effective.

Roger Dooley: Dan, a neuro marketer walks into an art gallery, and that sounds like a setup for a joke, but this is sort of what you did. I thought the book was really fascinating because we don't expect to see this kind of analysis of artwork as opposed to the latest BMW commercial or something like that, so it was fascinating. I'm curious, you've sort of set us up for how you got interested in art. When you were evaluating people's to art or what they were looking at and what their emotional response was, I take it you couldn't just wander to the Tate or National Gallery with a bunch of headsets, right? How did you conduct this research?

Dan Hill: It did start in the art museums in that probably the inspiration was I read someplace that supposedly the average person in an art museum looks at a work of art for 20 seconds. Immediately my BS detector went off and I said, "I don't think that's the case. The next time I was in New York on business, I carved out some time and went to the Brooklyn Museum, the Guggenheim, and the Frick, and just spend some hours as a researcher tabulating how long people looked at the artwork. What I found out

was four seconds, followed by five seconds of looking at the title card, and maybe one second back to the artwork. It was 1/5 of the time this person was alleging was the experience.

When I set up the study, I was generous, I gave it 15 seconds, not the full 20. I had an eye tracking machine. The artwork was not shown in person, in real time, that would require me to go around to too many galleries in the world. But they saw the artwork, apples to apples comparison on the screen, and of course that allowed me also to capture their facial expressions since Toby has a camera built into the screen facing toward the study participant.

15 seconds, we had 97 participants, 88 artworks. I divided into three tranches, so any one person saw a third of the artwork in the study and we just kind of moved it through. The only additional element besides a pause between each artwork was that halfway through, I would verbalize the title of the artwork and the artist's last name, so that was the additional input.

Roger Dooley: Interesting. Do you think that people react differently on a screen versus in person? It seems like I do. I've had a chance to visit some great galleries, just in London at the National Gallery, there's just some monumental canvases there, just enormous canvases. At the same time, I recall a few years ago I was doing a speech in Sao Paulo and there was a Hieronymus Bosch painting there that was a very small canvas. You could stand there and put your face away from it, or at least until the guards get too nervous. It seems like that in-gallery experiences is

different. I'm curious whether you did anything to evaluate that or what your impression is.

Dan Hill: I think for what I'll call the outlier experience, where you're really enthralled by a piece, and you stay with it, and you're really up close, and obviously the colors and everything, how it hits you will be stronger. Actually, I feel really good about the study results because lo and behold, we ran all of this stuff for 15 seconds per artwork. What happened from both the terms of the eye tracking, there's a term called fixations where the eye stays with a detail for long enough, I think it's 1/30th of a second, where it with a detail long enough for it mentally register. From both that perspective and when were they emotionally engaged, when did their facial muscles move to signal interest, in both cases, the lion's share of the results came in the first four seconds. Exactly the timing of how long people took in the art museums in real life to look at the pieces.

Roger Dooley: Okay. That's a pretty good indicator then, right? That people are reacting in a somewhat similar way, even though the experience might be different. It's kind of funny, I read the description that's happening in four seconds and I said, "Wait a minute now, you can't look at a Bosch painting in four seconds." Sure enough, even in the book you identified Bosch as one that did hold people's fixation for longer, just because they're so incredibly detailed and all these little tiny stories going on in the detail.

Dan Hill: Yeah, no, that's the Garden of Earthly Delights, which is at the Prado and absolutely blew me away when I saw it. To bring it home to marketing for our listeners, I think this

tells me something that I already suspected and probably frankly saw in my 20 years of doing work for more than half the world's top 100 B to C companies, which is marketing, especially from a visual sense, is a lot like trying to stick the landing. It is like trying to land an airplane on a helicopter pad, you have really little time and space in which to make that first vital impression in the hopes that you can get a toe hold and bring them in more strongly.

I think that's one of the really key learnings. We often in business talk about an 80/20 rule. 20% of the customers bring us 80% of the revenue. I have two or three different 70/30 rules from this book. One of them is 70% of the response is going to happen upfront in the first 1/3 of the frame, four to five seconds out of the 15 seconds I granted people

Roger Dooley: Advertising too probably gets less of a chance even than paintings. If you're looking at paintings, you figure that your job there is to take a look at it and see if you appreciate it or like it even, if not actually analyze it. But if you're flipping through a magazine, you're probably motivated to get past the ads to read the content, so you've got even less chance than three seconds to stop that viewer.

Dan Hill: Oh, I agree. These are some of the greatest artworks of all time. Mona Lisa was in this study and on and on the list goes. A good friend of mine who'd worked in major ad agencies in New York and LA had a really simple rule for any print ad or landing page. He would look at the visual image, if it's printed on a piece of paper, turn it upside down immediately and say, "Is there one detail from the

imagery that's available to me that's going to stick with me potentially?" It's really unlikely to be a word, every now and then you can manage to own a word. It's far more likely that it's either an image, has multiple images in that collage that was presented, or a detail within the singular image. That's all you got, that's your first and last chance to get into the fight.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. Whenever you see just straight eye tracking studies of ads, it seems like it's always people's faces that are what get attention right away and they often get most of the attention. They're the hotspots that are burned into the ad by the hotspot display, the people who are familiar with those sort of red and yellow bands that show what people looked at. Was that pretty much what you found with paintings?

Dan Hill: Yeah. The rule that it's faces, faces, faces holds up. I certainly saw it in 20 years of market research and I see it in this study. If there was a face in the artwork, or multiple faces, that got the lion's share. Once again, this is another 70/30 rule. 70% of the visual gaze activity went to the face or faces evident and 70% of the emotional engagement went to the face.

Faces are really important, but I can tell you from all of my research, as well as just sitting back and watching the Superbowl ads every year, there are some real mistakes that are made and I want to run through a few of them for the listeners, if you don't mind. One is there are too many faces in a lot of the advertising. I remember many years ago setting a print ad for Nationwide Insurance and they had 13 people on the direct mail piece. I said, "It's too many." I said, "This works for the Last Supper by

Michelangelo, but we know the story and the guy in the middle has got a halo around him." When you throw those many faces at somebody and you do the math and say, "Huh, I got four seconds, maybe I've only got three seconds," there's just no chance for something to fight through. Too many, too much, in terms of faces as a problem. Too quick, when you see TV spots, they have this super quick editing, but the eye needs a little bit of time to catch up.

I've done a lot of work in politics as well, some of it as a pundit for CNN, and Fox, and the New York Times, and so forth. I remember once looking at an ad and we used eye tracking and facial coding, it was for John McCain. It was essentially an unbranded political commercial because John's face was in the screen the whole way through, but he never said his name, it was never shown any place. Finally, at the end, his name was at the bottom, but everyone's eye had been trained for 28 seconds to look at the top of the screen or the top, basically third of the screen. They barely were getting down to where the name was when the commercial went off the air. It was an unbranded spot.

You really have to play with the faces, but you have to also allow that people need a little time to digest them. I would also say that sometimes the faces in commercials are too distant. We can't see them, they're obscure, they're too subtle. Advertising's not a good time often to be overly subtle.

A couple other things. They're too contrived. I remember speaking in Estonia, I got done with my speech, first question off the floor, someone said, "You're an

American. You smile all the time. Isn't it fake?" I was a little bowled over by the question. I said, "It's true I smile a lot. I enjoy my work, I'm a fairly happy camper, there's something called the American Dream." I said, "What I suspect is behind your question is that we are preeminently advertisers in America among other things and we use a lot of cheesy smiles in our advertising and people get turned off that they're not authentic." You want a smile that's a real smile, which involves the muscle around the eye relaxing, it's why you get the twinkle in the eye. The social smile is just the cheeks lifting.

The other thing I would say, speaking of emoting and these faces and making them effective, whether it's in art and it was true in my study, or in advertising, don't make them dull. A more expressive face is better than a poker face. That might be a great tactic in negotiations, it's a terrible tactic in marketing.

Roger Dooley: I'm guessing your experience in Estonia was at least partly cultural. I think in some Slavic cultures there is a reluctance to smile in particular. I was in St. Petersburg last fall and had a Russian tour guide, who was a very pleasant lady who smiled a lot, but she related that that was quite unusual and that as a child, her parents, if they caught her smiling would ask her, "Why are you smiling? People will think you're crazy." It isn't that people in Russia are all dour and unhappy, it's just that they seem to tend to reserve smiling more for special occasions. Where in the States it seems that the default mode is a bit more of an ongoing smile, perhaps.

Dan Hill: Yeah, no, I've been in St. Petersburg myself, a really fascinating city. One day for lunch, I got a waitress who

actually smiled. I was so shocked and pleased that I came back the next day for another meal. I normally like to vary my restaurants, but it's true. I asked her, I actually had a bit of a conversation, she knew English, and I said, "Why the lack of smiling?" She said, "We have a saying in Russia that if you smile, it means that you're a fool, that you don't understand what's going on around you."

Estonia certainly does have a portion of Russian Slavic immigrants, they were brought in by Stalin, but I would say they're also frankly rather Nordic. I happen to be half Norwegian American and there's the Garrison Keillor joke about the Norwegian American man who loved his wife so dearly that he very nearly told her so.

Roger Dooley: They're emotionally reserved as well.

Dan Hill: They are. The fact that I'm an emotions expert is something of a cosmic joke, I suppose.

Roger Dooley: As you were looking at these faces, do painters use tricks like some advertisers do to say, direct a gaze of a prominent face to some other thing that they want you to notice? I know that pointing is pretty obvious, where somebody in an ad is pointing at something, but the gaze is also apparently effective. Do you see that in paintings?

Dan Hill: Oh, yeah. Goya uses that in The Third of May. If you look at the victim, who's about being shot by the French soldiers, that takes you back in a dynamic of the cross gazes between the soldiers and the most prominent victim. Rembrandt is good at this. No, that's certainly one of the tricks that could and should be used. It's also true that you should put any detail, if you have a face and you

probably do, most advertising does have one or more faces, it's rather foolish to put some other really key details too far away from the face since the face is going to grab the lion's share of the response.

I know you use this in your book, it was from some of my research, I call the lower right corner of the Corner of Death, as you may recall. Because when people come up through something, whether it's a landing page, or a print ad, and so forth, they tend to start from the lower foreground up through the middle and essentially the last or second to last place they get is the lower right hand corner. That tends to be where logos get placed. It's also in some unfortunate cases where the artists like to put their signature on the painting. Leaves it essentially an unbranded painting or a piece of advertising far too often.

Roger Dooley: Right. I guess usually, at least to the artist signature isn't a prominent element, although perhaps some artists might try and make it so. Something that you found was that people tend to, maybe this is just sort of an obvious thing, but not necessarily, that people tend to look at the middle of paintings. Even if there are important elements near the edges, they get less viewing time, right?

Dan Hill: Yeah, no, I would call the four corners of any page, whether it's a canvas or a landing page, Outer Mongolia. That's not the place where the most action is likely to take place because we got so little time, four seconds, think about it as hud, hud, hike in a football game. If you can't get across or get at least some emotional momentum going in that timeframe, you're in trouble. Visuals are a much quicker way to connect and people reading words, people don't read that quickly, they don't read that much.

There is a couple of cases in my book where there was words incorporated into the artwork, whether it's a photograph or a painting, for instance. There was one, in fact, that it has a billboard and it's talking about in the billboard, how prosperous we are as a country, but what it actually shows is African-Americans lined up for aid because there's been a flood in Louisville. In that case, because the words are so tied into the irony and the meaning of the supposedly great American life, those registered. But there's a lot of cases where frankly, the visual's just more exciting, more interesting, and the words kind of come across as, "Blah, blah, blah," and people aren't likely to go there.

Roger Dooley: One comment he made in the book, Dan, that resonated with me was that people are like cats. Specifically, the more you make people exert themselves, the greater the odds are that they will resent you for having to make the effort. That's pretty much the theme of my Friction book that in customer experience, that resentment of effort translates into loss of loyalty, switching to other brands, bad word of mouth, and all sorts of bad outcomes. Explain about your take on this effort and how it sort of negatively affects the experience.

Dan Hill: Even there's one particular aspect, I had people also respond to the titles. I mentioned eight seconds in I gave them the title. If the title was meaningful or was kind of poetic and fanciful, then they really went for it. But if you made them work, like you gave them no help and it was Untitled Artwork #37, no thank you. They yawned and passed out and there was very little emotional response, and what it was was negative. If you gave them an unfamiliar term, if you call it simply something like Three

Flags. You can look at the painting by Jasper Johnson, there's three flags there. That's a very functional title. None of those are a helping hand for the viewer.

One of my key things that I've always drawn on in both advertising and in this book was William Wundt. No one's ever heard of William Wundt, I hadn't heard of William Wundt. William Wundt was the co-founder of modern psychology with Freud. What he came to realize, what he concluded was there was this Wundt's Curve of how you're going to make the sweet spot happen for somebody. First of all, you got to honor the cat. That means it's either got to be simple or familiar, that's the first way in. Then you could take what is simple and make it novel, so there's a twist. Or you can take what's familiar, but add some complexity to it. If you do one of those two things, one of those two routes, then you can hit a sweet spot. You've both given them a landing site, think of that helicopter pad, and then you've added some spice to it to make it interesting.

What doesn't work, and I saw this in my art book, I saw it in the advertising that I've tested over all these years, what doesn't work is one of two things, and this is often true, first of all, of the client. They are playing it too safe, too timid, and they end up with applesauce rather than apple pie. They do that because they make it both simple and familiar. There's nothing in there, there's no spice. You've honored the cat, but the cat is asleep. On the other hand, you set the cat on fire because you go where the ad agency loves to go when they can do out of the box creative, and now you've made it complicated and novel. Now it's just too much. You need to let the cat

move around, nap a little bit, but don't leave it dead asleep and don't set it on fire.

Roger Dooley: Do you think that we are getting information from paintings that we don't consciously processed? That's something that scientists have looked at and I guess, come to different conclusions. I'm wondering whether you found anything like that, or even whether your methodology would disclose that. In other words, I know that you sometimes found that people didn't appear to look at details that might've been important to the story in the painting, but they were not displayed conspicuously enough that they attracted people's attention. I'm curious whether you think that those were processed at some level, even if people weren't staring at them.

Dan Hill: I have a bit of a debate going with my wife who thinks if it's eye tracking, you don't get the hotspots, where it's orange or red or least green based on visual attention being paid and duration. To my mind then, you're going to have very little mental processing. As an artist you'd like to hold onto the belief that even though it's simply black in an eye tracking result, that there's still a chance that peripheral vision means you're working with it a bit.

Based on my readings of brain science, there's probably some allowance for that, but the likelihood that you're really applying much mental power to it is probably pretty low. One of the conclusions from the book ironically, is that there are all sorts of incidences where a really important visual doesn't particularly register with someone.

Let's take perhaps the most shocking one from the study, the Creation of Adam by Michelangelo. Obviously, there's a point where God and Adam are about to touch fingers. You have a couple of problems here, one is that based on the flesh tones and the off white color behind it, you don't really have good color separation, so it loses out a bit that way. But it also loses out because we're really fascinated by God's face. I looked through all sorts of art, I can't find a single other artist who is as daring as Michelangelo and was prepared to depict God's face. You can see Jesus, and the Virgin Mary, and this and that, and a whole bunch of saints, but God's face? No, only Michelangelo, who was one very bold guy, would dare to go there and we're simply fascinated by his face. The face upstages the storytelling, which is the fingers touching.

That's a pretty shocking example, but the book and my study was replete with all sorts of instances where quite honestly, it does not pay to be overly subtle. I have a PhD in academia, in English, and academia loves nothing more than to be subtle. I would have to tell you as a marketer to be effective, sure, you might work in a few interesting wrinkles, but you better make sure the main story is pretty clear and the cat gets involved,

Roger Dooley: Right. Don't count on anybody processing those subtle details. If somebody does, so much the better, but don't plan on that. Dan, a while back, we had Teddy Asher on the show and she's a specialist in the neuroscience of museum design. That's a pretty unusual discipline.

Dan Hill: Yeah. Peabody Essex. No, I know Teddy. Yeah, good person, good person.

Roger Dooley: Your book looks at individual works of art, I'm curious whether you have any findings that you translate to the macro level. There is an attention curve on individual pieces of art, but I think there's also an attention curve in museums. That's what Teddy found, that sort of the farther you get, the faster you go. I'm sure you've had that experience. Now, you being maybe more interested in art, you're looking at that last room with the same intensity that you've exerted in the first room in the museum that you visited. As more of an amateur myself, I find that by the fifth room of landscapes, I'm tending to go a little bit more quickly than I did in the first one.

Dan Hill: Yeah. You're human, and you're like me, and you're like everybody else. As I said, we divided the 88 artworks into three tranches, so everyone saw just around 30 artworks. Even in that time span in our test, because I was curious to know this result, there was fatigue that set in, museum fatigue set in. We tracked each person from the first to the last and looked at the pattern. When they got to the last batch of the artworks they saw, on average their visual acuity in terms of the fixations and their level of emotional engagement had gone down 5%.

Now, that's just 33 artworks. If you think about typical museum, you probably see that within the first two rooms, maybe even in the first room. The attrition rate has got to be enormous as people move through. Yeah, there might be a room where the artists, or the subject matter, or the period, or something really grabs you, but there's a tremendous risk of falling off.

What can save that is making it something that people can relate to. Probably the winner of the study in many

ways were installation pieces. The overall grand winner really followed the formula that I talked about from Wundt. It took a bed, and it's called My Bed, by Tracy Emin, you can see it at the Tate Gallery in London if you're next there or live in the UK. Tracy basically lived in this bed apparently for about three weeks or more after a romantic relationship ended. Her nylons are on the bed, empty vodka bottle, cigarette carton, all sorts of debris is alongside the edge of the bed, including a pair of suitcases. I think this is something that in one sense was very familiar, we're born in a bed quite possibly, die in a bed quite probably, make love and a bed, sleep in a bed, lie around reading a book in bed, watching TV in bed. It had that familiar hook for people, but it also twisted it by adding in all these extra elements to the kind of so-called debris that was alongside the bed.

That was tremendously successful, but all sorts of pieces did that, even the very notorious urinal by Duchamp called Fountain, where he signed it R. Mutt. That was a breakthrough piece a century ago, actually now more than a century ago, and it still resonated. It was, I believe it was top three for emotional engagement. It's something that's familiar, grows into the status of an artwork and signed it R. Mutt, and it was really a very provocative piece. I'm sure anyone at an ad agency would love to manage to create a TV spot that resonates 100 years plus later with that kind of breakthrough potential.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, it's pretty amazing. It probably says something about human nature, but I'm not sure what. Your wife is an artist, does she ever accuse you of taking the fun out of art by analyzing it? Kind of like a literature professor

	would take a poem and do character counts and such on it?
Dan Hill:	No. Other than our little battle about peripheral vision, not especially. Actually when we're in a museum she's really keen on my knowing, in many cases, what is the expression. If it's a piece of portraiture, what emotions someone is showing on the face, since I'm a facial coding expert. That's important because emotions are contagious. They beat me to it, I was going to submit a new patent, which was going to be to say you want to identify the emotions in your target market and then show that kind of emotion as display in the marketing piece. Before I was just about to submit the application ,and I was doing the check for other prior art, lo and behold, Microsoft had submitted the same patent idea.
	Emotions are really contagious and in the book I go into the fact that there are emotions like anger and so forth, that if they are shown on the screen, in the artwork, in the print ad, the landing site page, and you kind of go this direction as a person, that's kind of your signature emotion, you're going to relate to it more easily. Kind of like saying, "Oh, it's me," and you relate, and you're on board, and it generally works. Where it doesn't work is actually happiness. I would take you right back to Estonia and all the concern about the inauthentic smiling. I think we've kind of worked smiles to death in a lot of cases and we need to be able to move on and add in some other emotions to remain effective.
Roger Dooley:	Yeah. Microsoft's been doing some work on group emotion recognition, haven't they?

Dan Hill: Yes, they are among the people automating facial coding. If I left them out of the list that I might've cited earlier, along with the usual Silicone Valley crowd, they are. I would have to say that in my estimation, from what I've been able to see so far, that what Apple is doing and Google looks to be more accurate. Some of the things that Microsoft has put out as part of their advertising literature on their facial coding results just doesn't seem well grounded to me. I'm sure it can get much better, I might have seen something on an off day, don't want to displease anyone from Microsoft necessarily. As a practitioner of the tool and someone who loves what it can do potentially, even though nothing's infallible, you want the highest accuracy, reliability rates possible.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. As a speaker, it'd be kind of fun to have some automation monitoring the audience and giving you either, real time feedback would be pretty interesting. Obviously you can age emotions at sort of a gross level, people are laughing or people are all looking very distracted, but having some real time feedback on what seems to be resonating would be a lot of fun. Even as a post game analysis.,That would be fun too.

Dan Hill: Yeah, no, certainly I do use that as a speaker and if I'm not outnumbered by the crowd, I have a fairly good sense of what's working and when I should maybe move on with something. On the other hand, I'm delighted to say as part of my book, Famous Faces Decoded, where I offered a guidebook on emotions and how to read them, I spoke at Best Buy corporate headquarters and they normally said they got about 100, 125 people to their lunchtime speaker series. We had over 800 people show up and it was basically like a rock concert. It was a fabulous, fun

experience. There, I could read the first few rows and then it became impossible.

Roger Dooley: Mm-hmm (affirmative). It's probably representative of the rest of the crowd. Let me remind our listeners that today we are speaking with Dan Hill, founder of Sensory Logic and author of Emotionomics, About Face, and most recently, First Blush: People's Intuitive Reactions to Famous Art. Dan, how can people find you?

Dan Hill: I have a website, danhill.sensorylogic.com. Sensory like your five senses. I would say that's the best way in where you're going to find information about the books, there's excerpts from videos of my speaking and so forth. I also have a blog, it's called Faces of the Week, often on politics, trying to approach it as best I can from a nonpartisan basis, but I also delve into popular culture, and sports, and other places. The handle for that is emotionswizard.com. I'd say those are the best two ways in.

Roger Dooley: Great. We will link to those places and to your books and any other resources we spoke about on the show notes page at rogerdooley.com/podcast. We'll have a text version of our conversation there too. Dan, thanks so much for being on the show.

Dan Hill: I really enjoyed it. It's fun to reconnect, Roger. Thanks.

Thank you for tuning into this episode of Brainfluence. To find more episodes like this one, and to access all of Roger's online writing and resources, the best starting point is RogerDooley.com.

Art, Ads, and Facial Coding with Dan Hill
https://www.rogerdooley.com/dan-hill-first-blush

And remember, Roger's new book, *Friction*, is now available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and book sellers everywhere. Bestselling author Dan Pink calls it, "An important read," and Wharton Professor Dr. Joana Berger said, "You'll understand Friction's power and how to harness it."

For more information or for links to Amazon and other sellers, go to RogerDooley.com/Friction.